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DEDICATED

TO

THE REAL

MOTHER INDIA

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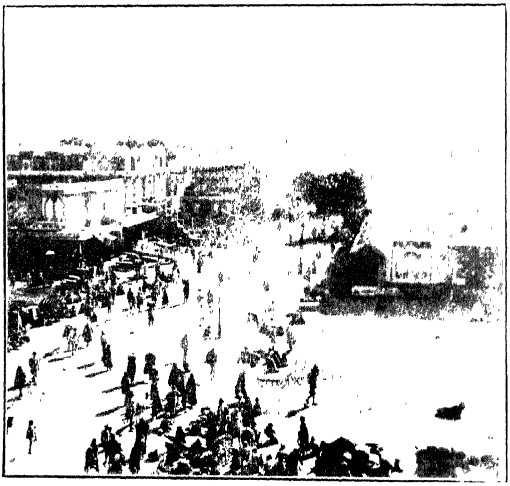
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Outside a Railway Station, Bombay

Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.





Street Scenes.

Introduction.

INTRODUCTION

> This one is my countryman; this other is a stranger—so thinks the man of narrow mind and heart. The noble soul regards the whole wide world as kin. —*Manu*

THIS book is a reply—I hope a complete reply—to the assertions made in Miss Katherine Mayo's "Mother India". As to facts it will show that she is generally wrong, and as to deductions from facts, that she is almost entirely wrong. While thus vindicating the real Mother India (as the Indians affectionately call their country) I hope this book will be still more useful in giving a true picture of Indian life and conditions.

I write as an Englishman familiar with many phases of Indian life. As such, I beg of the reader or student to start fair. *Understand first*; then criticize, then approve or disapprove. As no nation is perfect we must often understand by comparison, but in such cases let us compare on the level, the worst with the worst, the best with the best, and the average with the average. As to defects, we must observe their

degree and extent, their causes and the steps which are being taken for their removal.

I do not wish to suggest that Miss Mayo has deliberately given false information, but I think she stayed in India but a short time, lived in European quarters and made excursions to various institutions under guidance which showed her the worst. She then seems to have proceeded to supplement her knowledge with reading on India, apparently not very varied, and to have picked out from that for quoting all that suited her preconceptions.

Many of her generalizations remind me of Max Muller's statement that we may judge of a whole field of rice by tasting one or two grains only, but if we apply this rule to human beings we are sure to fall into the same mistake as the English chaplain who had once, on board an English vessel, christened a French child, and remained fully convinced for the rest of his life that all French babies had very long noses. The learned Professor also said that he confessed to a little nervous tremor whenever he came across a sentence beginning with "the people of India", for what followed was almost invariably wrong.

Mountstuart Elphinstone, former Administrator of the Maharashtra and Governor of

Bombay, showed how easy it is for one in Miss Mayo's position to make mistakes, especially if predisposed to them. He wrote:

> Englishmen in India have less opportunity than might be expected of forming opinions of the native character. Even in England, few know much of the people beyond their own class, and what they do know, they learn from newspapers and publications of a description which does not exist in India. In that country also, religion and manners put bars to our intimacy with the natives, and limit the number of transactions as well as the free communication of opinions. We know nothing of the interior of families but by report, and have no share in those numerous occurrences of life in which the amiable parts of character are most exhibited.
>
> Missionaries of a different religion, judges, police-magistrates, officers of revenue or customs and even diplomatists, do not see the most virtuous portion of a nation, nor any portion, unless when influenced by passion or occupied with some personal interest. What we *do* see we judge by our own standard. We conclude that a man who cries like a child on slight occasions must always be incapable of acting or suffering with dignity; and that one who

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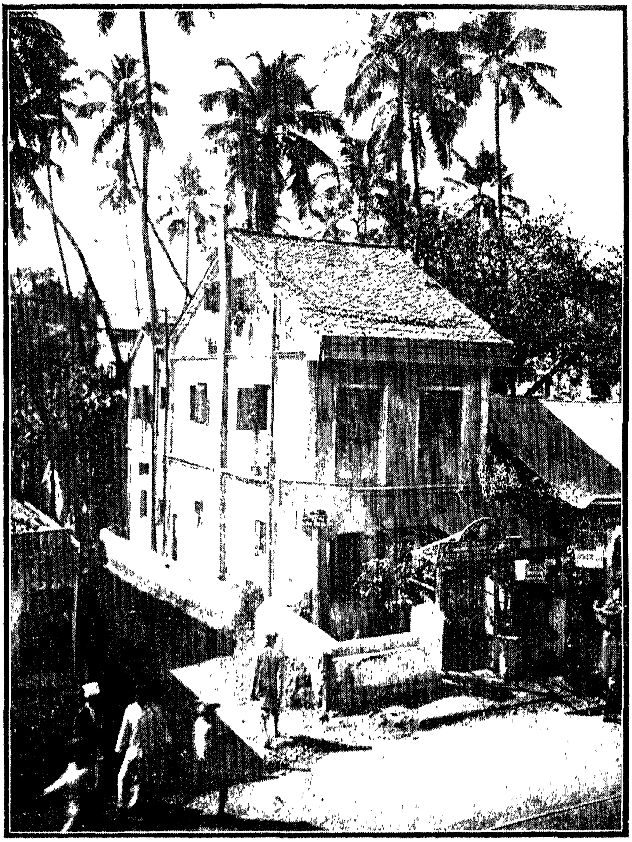
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allows himself to be called a liar would not be ashamed of any baseness.

Our writers also confound the distinctions of time and place; they combine in one character the Mahratta and the Bengalese; and tax the present generation with the crimes of the heroes of the Mahâbhârata. It might be argued, in opposition to many unfavourable testimonies, that those who have known the Indians longest have always the best opinion of them; but this is rather a compliment to human nature than to them, since it is true of every other people. It is more in point, that all persons who have retired from India think better of the people they have left, after comparing them with others, even of the most justly admired nations.*

As an instance of Miss Mayo's error of method let us consider her "Introduction". We are in Calcutta. We find ourselves behind the high walls of the Government House, where "decorous and sophisticated people of all creeds, all colors and costumes, go to Government House Garden Parties, pleasantly to make their bows to Their Excellencies, and pleasantly to talk good English while they take their tea and ices and listen to the regimental band."†

**History of India*, Mountstuart Elphinstone, p. 213.
†*Mother India*, p. 3.



An Indian House in Bombay.

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On the Steps at Kalighat.

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Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.

After tea, we emerge through the gates into the great city which surrounds us. There is a brief reference to the big modern buildings and parks of Calcutta, which might belong to a prosperous American city, and to the Indian town of temples, mosques, bazaars and courtyards. In the bazaars apparently no persons are of interest except some "narrow-chested, near-sighted, anæmic young Indian students, in native dress, brooding over piles of fly-blown Russian pamphlets"—which literature is, however, prohibited by law.

Yet surely here is a great body of peaceable folk. If I buy a morning or evening paper, I may see therein a few headlines relating to crimes of different kinds. If I cut these out and collect them sedulously for a few weeks or months, I may be able to accumulate as many as I could find in one day's paper in New York or Chicago. There must be many law-abiding people among the two millions who throng this busy hive, engaged in many interesting activities, but Miss Mayo does not introduce us to any of these. Outside the gates of the Government House, there is a bus, labelled Kali Ghat. She leaps aboard and, for the purpose of introducing us to India, takes us to the most disagreeable spot in the land. To clinch the

matter, she uses Kipling's metaphor, "The Bus to Mandalay", to describe this journey.

The defects of Miss Mayo's method are seen again when she takes us to a hospital and shows us a number of young girls suffering terribly from personal cruelty and the pains of immature motherhood, but makes no mention of the great maternity hospitals of Bombay and Madras, where the average ages of first motherhood are respectively over eighteen and nineteen years.

The same error appears once more in Miss Mayo's generalization upon Indian history, which is: "Back of Britain's day, India was ever either a chaos of small wars and brigandage, chief preying upon chief, and all upon the people; or else she was the flaccid subject of a foreign rule."*

This is not the first time that I have heard thoughtless people talk in this way about the wars of the past in India. Apparently they have never read Indian history, or they would know something about some of the extensive and long-lived empires.

I do not want in this book to enter into the enormous subject of Indian history. There are some hundreds of valuable books on the

*_Ibid_, p. 21.

subject. I will content myself merely with a brief statement of an excellent authority entirely in opposition to Miss Mayo's assertion: "Measured by the conditions prevailing throughout the last one, two or three thousand years, it may well be claimed that the civilization of India has been superior to that of Europe. There have been more people, and they have been less at war with each other and better supplied with enjoyable things than Europeans as a whole."*

Touching on another and similar statement of Miss Mayo's, and treating it in a more comparative way, that old student and friend of India, Dr. Annie Besant, writes:

> It is news that when the English merchants appeared in India, they found it "a country discordant and dissentient within itself, full of warring sects, with no prospect of a stable and unified dominion." Elizabeth signed the first merchant charter, and she had tortured and pressed to death Roman Catholics, as her predecessor burnt Protestants, while Akbar, ruling over a mighty Empire, employed impartially Hindus and Musalmans, and held religious discussions every week in his own palace. One of

***The Evolution of Government and Laws*, (Princeton University Press), S. H. Allen, p. 199.

the southern kingdoms of India had lasted for thousands of years before the Company destroyed it. India is about as large as Europe without Russia; was Europe so peaceful and so free from religious turmoil and shocking persecutions that it can cast a stone at India's far better conditions?*

It is true that there was considerable disturbance in the country during the breaking up of the Mogul Empire, and before the country was well settled under the new rule. The white man was already well established in the country when the decay of that Empire began, and the European nations—British, French, Portugese and Dutch—were at different times fighting one another, in alliance with various chieftains, in their struggle for the wealth of India. It is possible to quote from some travellers accounts of defective conditions which they had observed in India during this period, and from others glowing records of her peace and prosperity.

I will take only one more picture of Miss Mayo's India to show the defect of her method. She writes:

> Take a girl-child twelve years old, a pitiful physical specimen in bone and blood, illiterate,

New India, Dec. 1, 1927.

ignorant, without any sort of training in habits of health. Force motherhood upon her at the earliest possible moment. Rear her weakling son in intensive vicious practices that drain his small vitality day by day. Give him no outlet in sports. Give him habits that make him, by the time he is thirty years of age, a decrepit and querulous old wreck—and will you ask what has sapped the energy of his manhood?

Take a huge population, mainly rural, illiterate and loving its illiteracy. Try to give it primary education without employing any of its women as teachers—because if you do employ them you invite the ruin of each woman that you so expose. Will you ask why that people's education proceeds slowly?

Take bodies and minds bred and built on the lines thus indicated. Will you ask why the death-rate is high and the people poor?*

One might as well say of the United States: "Take women who have been divorced again and again; take children who have had no proper homes in consequence of this; take the products of life in cities which are full of night clubs, hectic dancing, criminal 'fences', bootleggers and gunmen, and where the newspaper which records the most crimes in the

**Mother India*, p. 16.

fullest detail has the biggest circulation. Take a nation of people who are like restless spirits from some underworld, rushing about recklessly in automobiles, careless of the injured and killed,* racing to and fro with no real end or object in view but glandular stimulation and excitement." And then say: "Surely a race developed under these conditions must be a veritable colony of hell and a menace to the world."

But if one of my Hindu friends drew this picture I should tell him that I know the American people better than that.

Such methods remind us of a disagreeable type of Europeans, now happily extinct, who used to allude to Indians as "niggers", thereby displaying their own ignorance as well as lack of heart. We shall never understand Indians if we forget that they belong to the same racial group as ourselves. The ancient Sanskrit language is sister to the Greek and the Latin. Pure Indian features are like European features, and the complexion in the far north

*In 1927 in New York State alone 894 children were killed and 11,710 injured by automobiles. Newton D. Baker, Chairman of the National Crime Commission, stated that organized "fences" in the United States disposed of loot valued at 500 million dollars in the year.

is as fair as that of many southern Europeans. Where we find a darker skin, it is due to the influence of the sun through many generations. Thick lips and other non-Aryan characteristics, when they occur, are due to mixture with aboriginal tribes of the country.

One has only to make an observant journey, beginning at Tuticorin or Dhanushkodi in the extreme south, and go northward on the train through the southern part of the Madras Presidency (the Tamil country), the northern part of the same Presidency (Telugu and Kanarese countries), the southern part of the Bombay Presidency (Marathi country), the northern part of the same Presidency (Gujarati country), and so on northward through the Punjab and into Kashmir, to verify this with one's own eyes. As one makes this five days' train journey, and observes the people whom one sees on the platforms of the railway stations and getting in and out of the trains, one finds that there is a gradual shading off from the very dark to the very fair as one passes from the torrid to the temperate climate.

To give an example, when I was first introduced to Pandit Iqbal Narain Gurtu, a Kashmiri friend of mine, he was dressed in

European clothes, and as I did not catch his name properly, I thought he was an Englishman. He is no exception. I have seen too, again and again, in families containing many members living together, the great difference in color between those who have indoor and those who have outdoor occupations.* I need not go into further detail with regard to what scholars have proved over and over again—that the consanguinity of the Hindus is with us.

Though the Aryans of India and those of Europe are of the same race, they developed in somewhat different ways on their separate continents. From our standpoint it thus appears that the Indian people in general are backward in certain things, are still where we were in America and Europe fifty or a hundred years ago. But in some other things India may be ahead of us; from her we also may have to learn.

I will digress to give one example of this which may be of special interest. Does the

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*Mr. William Archer expresses the same opinion:

"The Indian races, take them all round, are not low, but very high races. They are not "black men" as the negro is black, but sunburnt white men. Color is an accident in India; in Africa, and Afro-America, it marks a radical difference."

India and the Future, p. 24.

average American know how great is the debt which America already owes to India? I do not mean in any merely spiritual way, but with respect to civilization and the practical character of American affairs. Let me show how India helped America in the last century.

There are two things which strike the visitor to America as characteristic. First, the American believes in the future, that is to say, in the unlimited possibilities of human progress. This is idealism. It makes him always ready to try to improve. In the language of warfare, he is not consolidating his position, but winning new ground. Secondly, he is practical. This is common-sense idealism, and ideal common-sense. He may not have worked it out in theory, but in fact his acceptance of the world and its laws is a sort of tacit belief that God is not only in his heaven but also in his world. He believes that the best can be got out of life by honestly tilling that plot of land which has been given him to till. A bountiful God and a race of honest workers have combined to produce "God's own country".

Now, if we read the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson we find that these are the two things which he propounded over and over again in

different forms. He said that ploughing was prayer, and that there is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases and God, the cause, begins. Great numbers of young people listened to him, and his thoughts affected many other speakers and writers; so he had much to do with the building of the nationality and character that we now call American. His belief in the great possibilities of man's future was the outcome of his transcendental outlook, and was expressed in such sayings as: "Everything is fluid to thought."

Emerson was greatly assisted in these inspirations by his study of Hindu thought. It is related that on a certain occasion a party of young men came to the philosopher and desired to know how they might become learned. He told them to read good books for five hours every day. They asked, "What books?" His answer was: "Any good books that you like." But as they were about to depart he called them back and said, "But do not forget to read the Hindu books." It is said also that in his last years he always carried a pocket edition of the *Bhagavad Gita* about with him.

I have been in his library at Concord, and have seen there the early English translations

of various Sanskrit books which were familiar to me. Having obtained the unusual privilege of staying there a little while, I took some of those books from the shelves and looked at the pages where he had put little bits of paper to mark the places of special interest to him, and there were to be seen many of the thoughts with which he was so much in tune.

In this way America owes a debt to India in connection with those very qualities of character which America values most and for which the rest of the world admires America.

Some may think this statement rather strange, since Indians are not commonly spoken of as practical, however transcendental they may be. But if we read the history of India carefully, we shall no longer think it so. When the white traders first went to that land they marvelled again and again at the wonders of civilization which they found. India was *the* great manufacturing country in those days, and supplied many parts of the world with beautiful and rich cloths and other things. In the production of food also India was a busy land. In the middle of the eighteenth century Phillimore wrote that "the droppings of her soil fed distant regions." No traveller found India poor until the nineteenth century, but

foreign merchants and adventurers sought her shores for the almost fabulous wealth which they could there obtain. "To shake the pagoda tree" became a phrase, somewhat similar to our modern expression "to strike oil".

Nearly two thousand years earlier, Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador at the Court of the Indian Emperor Chandragupta Maurya, also found the Indians to be practical people. He described the country as in a splendidly advanced and active state, and observed with admiration the absence of slavery, the chastity of the women and the courage of the men. He remarked that the people were honest and truthful, and required no locks to their doors, that they were sober and industrious, good farmers and skilful artisans, and scarcely ever had recourse to a law-suit, but lived peaceably under their chiefs. The kingly Government he portrayed almost as depicted in the code of Manu, and he described the village system, each little rural unit seeming to him an independent republic.*

Professor Max Muller, the scholar, also appreciated India. He wrote:

If I were to look over the whole world to find

*See *A Brief History of the Indian Peoples*, Sir W. W. Hunter, 23rd ed., p. 88.

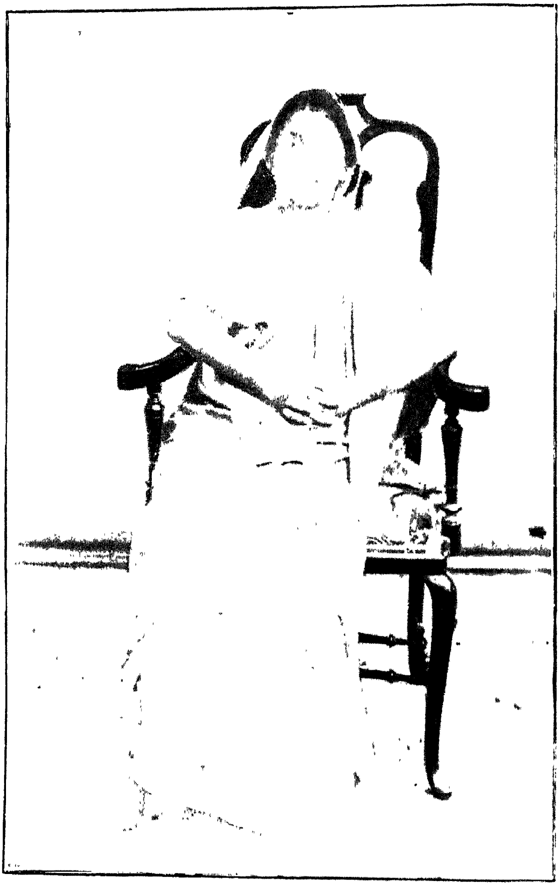
out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power, and beauty that nature can bestow—in some parts a very paradise on earth —I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic Race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.*

**India : What Can It Teach Us?* F. Max Muller, p. 6.



A Hindu Lady

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Sarojini Naidu—The Poetess.

CHAPTER I

THE FAMILY

Greeting fair, and room to rest in;
  Fire, and water from the well—
Simple gifts—are given freely
  In the house where good men dwell.

Hitopadesa

I will try first to present the idea of Hindu family life and marriage as I have learnt about it directly from the Hindus themselves. Their conception of marriage does not contain in the forefront the satisfaction of desire within legal bounds. On the contrary, the ideas are (1) the continuance of the race and (2) the completion of man in the form of the family.

For (1) the continuance of the civilization which has so far been developed it is the duty of each man, with some few exceptions, to marry and produce one son at least. Therefore there are few unmarried adults in India. A man is not honourable and blessed here or

hereafter unless he performs this elementary duty to the social order. This injunction to bring forth a son is not primarily connected with supposed after-death conditions. The man is expected to do it because he is in debt to society. His parents have provided him with a body. He must now discharge that debt by providing another in his turn. This is a moral obligation in the Hindu code. A man's debt to the ancestors is not discharged until he has thus paid it to posterity. He may have more children if he likes, but it is specifically stated by Manu that the first son is the son of duty, while the others are sons of personal desire. This wise old rule has been a stimulus to racial duty but a moral check on over-population. A son is mentioned because the male is the support of the family; however many daughters a man may have, he must continue his family duty until he obtains one son. It is assumed that generally speaking there will be about the same number of girls as boys born in the community.

On this principle is based the old Hindu law of primogeniture, not dissimilar to that which existed and still prevails to some extent in England. Here is Manu's statement on the subject:

> The child of Manu becometh a parent when his first son is born to him, and is released from his debt to his own parents. The eldest-born therefore deserves the whole of the patrimony. To him the father passes on the burden of his triple debts. By his help he wins the long ages of bliss in the super-physical worlds. He alone therefore is the child of duty. The others that may be born after him are the children of passion. The eldest-born alone should therefore hold and manage the ancestral property, and all the younger-born should be looked after by him as by their father himself.*

Miss Mayo seems to have no knowledge of the way in which Hindu social life is governed by the idea of duty. Her generalization on the situation is: "Hindu custom demands that a man have a legitimate son at the earliest possible moment—a son to perform the proper religious ceremonies at and after the death of the father, and to crack the father's skull on the funeral pyre, whereby the spirit is released. For this reason as well as from inclination, the beginning of the average boy's sexual commerce barely awaits his ability. Neither general

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*_The Science of Social Organization_, B. Bhagavan Das, p. 224.

habit nor public opinion confines that commerce to his wife or wives".*

Later on we shall see that the sweeping commitments of the last two sentences are utterly unwarranted by evidence. Here I must explain that it is the custom for the son who has become the head of the family to attend to his father's obsequies.

I happen to be the man who translated for the Sacred Book of the Hindus Series the volume entitled *Garuda Purana*, which is the standard book dealing with death ceremonies. It does say that the son should be present at the funeral and that he should do various things, including the final cracking of the skull after the body has been burnt, and these ceremonies are to some extent followed when practicable. But the complicated ceremonies so prescribed represent an excessively florid growth developed and encouraged by the priests a thousand years ago, which is certainly not now carried out in detail. Quite recently a distinguished Hindu scholar laughed at those things and told me that he and many others took no notice of such products of the Middle Ages. I could give names of a hundred more Hindu

*Mother India, p. 26.

gentlemen with whom I am acquainted who would say exactly the same thing.

The Hindus are not so materialistic as to assume that the soul needs to be released in this way. Did they so believe, old men would not go far from home on pilgrimages to sacred places, as they so often do, there to die in the absence of their sons. The following verses from the *Laws of Manu* (v. 158-60) show that the father's spirit has no difficulty in going to heaven, even though his skull be not cracked by a son on the funeral pyre. It is an instruction to the widow:

> Let her follow the ways and the rules of the celibates, improving her soul and her knowledge by the way of study and service of the elders, in place of the lost way of service of her husband and children. Let her triumph over her body and walk on the path of purity, following the way of the wife and husband that have not thought of other than each other.
>
> Thousands of virgin men have gone to the highest heaven without having passed through the household. Unto such heaven shall she go to join her partner-soul, even though they have no child to help them pay the debts, if she should be thus faithful to his memory and do deeds of good during the rest of her physical life.

In India, the family is an ancient and sacred thing. Western people can hardly understand the degree of close feeling which exists within it. Several brothers live in the same house with all their children, and often the children's children. All the children look up to the uncles and aunts as "other fathers" and "other mothers", and they regard all the other children, whom we should call cousins, as "brothers" and "sisters." The custom in India is also to look after the old people, just as we look after the children. Among us, a man who neglected his children or expected them to fend for themselves, would be regarded as a monster. That is exactly the attitude they have in India toward a man who neglects his old parents or aunts or uncles.

In this connection we should try to understand the Hindu mind, so as to realize that these people have not the intense feeling of *individuality* which we have. They do not think of their lives or plan them in terms of the individual, but in terms of the family. A man is not complete without a woman. It requires both sexes to make the unit of physical being. The only people not to marry are the holy men and holy women, who give up sex along with wealth, caste and every-



An Indian Gentleman.

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Dr. Subramania Aiyar,
Late Chief Justice, Madras High Court.

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thing else, and even they strive to attain the feminine as well as the masculine virtues of character and habits of thought. This idea is seen also in the way in which the personified Deity is often depicted as half male and half female, and in the statement of Manu that God divided himself into two and became man with one half and woman with the other. As Manu puts it:

> The man is not the man alone; he is the man, the woman and the progeny. The sages have declared that the husband is the same as the wife.*

There is thus no question as to the equality of men and women, but a belief in their identity or organic unity. An attempt to work out some of the qualities in which they complete each other is given in the *Vishnu Purana* and the *Vishnu Bhâgavata* as follows:

> He is Vishnu (the Preserver), she is Shri (Goddess of Prosperity and Felicity, wife of Vishnu). She is language, he is thought. She is prudence, he is law. He is reason, she is sense. She is duty, he is right. He is author, she is work. He is patience, she is peace. He is will, and she is wish. He is pity, she is gift.

* *Manu*, ix, 45, quoted in *The Science of Social Organization*, p. 218.

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He is chant and she is note. She is fuel, he is fire. She is glory, he is sun. She is orbs, he is space. She is motion, he is wind. He is ocean, she is shore. He is owner, she is wealth. He is battle, she is might. He is lamp and she is light. He is day and she is night. He is tree, and she is vine. He is music, she is words. He is justice, she is ruth. He is channel, she is stream. He is flag-staff, she is flag. She is beauty, he is strength. She is body, he is soul.

Because of this complementary character of man and wife the marriage ceremony among the Hindus is regarded as a sacrament, "a dutiful and holy means of arousing the higher emotions of reverence and love and compassion and self-sacrifice."* The household fire, which is so necessary for material purposes, thus became a symbol of the fire of the higher emotions which had been lit by the sacrament.

Much is said, in an accusing way, about the Hindu wife's being taught to look upon her husband as her personal God. Only those who do not understand the Indian mind could conclude that this is a means of her subjection or abasement. According to Hindu teaching one must look for the divine or higher qualities everywhere and in everyone. The teacher,

* *Ibid*, p. 214.

the mother and even the baby are also lenses of the divine light or God. The husband is equally enjoined to look upon his wife as a very incarnation of the feminine aspect of Deity, and is expected to reverence her as such. In speaking to her his affectionate term is often: "O Devi," which means goddess. The following occurs in the Laws of Manu, and is often repeated:

> The mother exceedeth a thousand fathers in the right to reverence, educator.*

Another verse says:

> The good women should always be honored and worshipped like the gods themselves. By the favor and the soul power of the true women are the three worlds upheld.†

In practice, from my own experience, I would say that the devotion of the Hindu husband to his wife is quite as great as hers to him. It is in fact one of the difficulties in carrying on business in India, that as soon as the men hear of the least little trouble or illness of the women or children at home, they rush away and let all their business go to pieces so that they may be at home, and there their loving care and devotion know no limits.

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* *Laws of Manu*, Bk. ii, 145.

† *Matsya Purana*, Ch. 214, sh. 21.

I suppose it is well known that in the sphere of the home the rule of the woman is paramount. I doubt if the Hindu husband very often expresses any opinion as to the food he would like to eat or anything of the kind, for he takes what to him is given and generally does what he is told to do in the home. In the orthodox marriage service of the Church of England, a woman says that she will "love, honor and obey" her husband. In the Hindu equivalent ritual the expressions are much more ornate and extreme on both sides. I suppose in each case the people concerned know exactly how to discount the words.

Some people may object to this emphasis upon the family as a fundamental social factor. They say that it is socially degrading for the women to be economically dependent upon the men. Well, I can only say that it is nature which in the main has provided that arrangement. The man must be largely the bread-winner, and the women must largely stay at home, as long as we have the family system in which children are kept at home. There has been talk in the West about other arrangements by means of which people will come together to produce children and then those children will be looked after in State or private

institutions. But that is not what is in view in India.

The women's position in the home is honorable. There is no indignity in her not going out into the world and fighting in the welter of our modern competitive systems. She is not "condemned" to some sort of "socially degrading" condition of dependency. She is playing a noble part in life. Must we see everything in terms of money and commerce?

Miss Mayo asserts that in the joint-family house, the new bride is "the acknowledged servant of the mother-in-law", who is depicted as a dreadful tyrant, which she may be sometimes. The words of the marriage service, which I will quote in my next chapter, show that no such relation is intended. Sometimes on the contrary the new wife rules the old motherin-law, through affection or through force of character.

There is also a criticism that the husband will still keep his affection and deference for his mother and will honor her above his wife. These defects do sometimes appear in the joint-family system, but on the other hand there are advantages. The women are not tied so closely to the home, and can often go visiting

other branches of the family for weeks at a time, and there is always much loving help at hand in times of difficulty or trouble. I have not space here to describe a joint-family house. It is usually a large rambling place with several patios or courtyards, and many verandahs and rooms assigned to different branches of the family. But the living rooms, etc., are in common.

Miss Mayo will give little credit to the Hindus for any sort of pure love. She tells us a story of the great delight of a lady who gave birth to a living baby boy. She had had two failures before and had been much depressed in consequence, but now she became imperative: "Give me my son! Send at once to my village and inform the father of my son that I desire his presence!" The father came, and about a dozen other relatives, "heaping like flies into the little family quarters attached, in India women's hospitals, to each private room."* Something nasty must be said; I should never have thought of flies. Ten days later they bore the mother and child home in triumphant procession. Good people. Human people.

This story is intended as a kind of negative

**Mother India*, p. 78.

evidence. The idea is that if this wife had not borne a son she would have been maltreated or her life would have been made not worth living! Miss Mayo cannot see the normal joy of motherhood in the case, although a few pages back she told us of the grief of a poor mother whose little girl had fallen down a well.

It is cruel to suggest that the Hindu husband does not love his wife, but only desires her because he may obtain from her some personal gratification and the present of a son. Family life in India is very affectionate, but husband and wife do not like to show their fondness for each other in public. It is something which they cherish as unique, beyond all degrees of friendship.

CHAPTER II

MARRIAGE

That friend is the true friend
  Who is near when trouble comes;
That man only is the brave man
  Who can bear the battle-drums;
Words are wind; deed proveth promise;
  He who helps at need is kin;
And the leal wife is loving
  Though the husband lose or win.

Hitopadesa

WE must note in thinking or speaking of marriage among the Hindus that there are in these days two ceremonies. Both of them are called marriage, though the first is strictly only a betrothal. Yet it is so much a marriage that it is binding in law, and if the boy or man dies the girl or woman is a widow. On this account statistics of the married in India cannot be used without close analysis. Sometimes the term is used for the first or "gift-marriage", sometimes for the second or



Two Hindu Brides (Bejewelled for the occasion).

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South Indian Girls.

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"consummation marriage". After the first marriage a girl-wife usually returns to her parents' house and lives there as a virgin until the second ceremony is performed, when she goes to her new home and enters upon the real duties of wifehood.

Sir Denzil Ibbetson remarks that in the Punjab the second ceremony is separated from the actual wedding by an interval of three, five, seven, nine, or eleven years, and the girl's parents fix the time for it, so that it often happens that the earlier in life marriage takes place, the later cohabitation begins.*

The gift-marriage is the only form of marriage which takes place with young children. Consummation below the age of thirteen is illegal, and that, it must be remarked, would be about equivalent to the age of fifteen in our colder climates.

I want to draw attention to some of the verses which are recited at the gift-marriage.

> "I take thy hand to have a fine progeny, that thou mayest live with me thy lord, until thou shalt attain decay."
>
> "This maiden, about to pass away from her parents to the husband's home, has ended her vow of maidenhood."

**The Leader*, Sep. 19, 1927.

"Go to the house, that thou mayest be the lady of the house. As mistress thou shalt direct the sacrificial rites."

"Become thou now my partner, as thou hast passed all the seven steps with me. Apart from thee now I cannot live. Apart from me do not thou live. We shall live together; we shall will together; we each shall be an object of love to the other; we shall be a source of joy each unto the other; with mutual goodwill shall we live together, sharing alike all foods and powers combined. I join thy mind, thy actions, thy senses with mine.. being what thou art, come thou now unto me, O sweet and pure, for the bringing forth of sons, wealth and progeny."

"Be thou a loving queen to the father-in-law, a loving queen to the mother-in-law, a loving queen to the sons-in-law, a loving queen to the brothers-in-law."

These portions of the marriage ritual are gathered together into the marriage service from the ancient *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. It is clear that they are inappropriate when applied to little girls who will go straight away from the ceremony back to their fathers' houses and remain there for several years before the time comes for the second ceremony

and the actual departure to the husband's house.

Sir T. Sadasiva Aiyar, late Judge of the High Court, Madras, commenting upon the opinions (not in agreement with current customs) in this matter of the late Dewân Bahadur Raghunâtha Rao, whom he describes as an intellectual giant, a great and genuinely religious man, says:

> Gift is *not* marriage, and the marriage itself is a sacramental contract which can be legally performed and completed between the bridegroom and bride only after the bride completes her fifteenth year (the age of a girl's majority.)
>
> Gift is absolutely unnecessary and unmeaning after the bride completes her fifteenth year and attains majority according to the Hindu law. It is, however, advisable for the bride to obtain the consent and blessings of the authors of her being when she enters into the marital relation.
>
> Sacramental marriage, after the free choice by the bride who has completed her fifteenth year, and by the bridegroom not less than twenty-four years old, of each other and with the consent and blessings of the parents of the bride (as in the case of the marriages of Savitri and Devahûti) is the best and most approved

form. Marriage should take place after the puberty of the bride and should legally take place only then.*

The learned exponent of Hindu scriptures and law adds that in strictness there should be no widowhood of the bride if the bridegroom happens to die before consummation. This is not the custom now, but may be expected to become so in time.

Before I take up the question of the actual age of marriage in India at the present time I must emphasize that the statistics refer to gift-marriage, not to consummation, and that they have therefore no connection whatever with the age of motherhood.

From the quotations I have given above from the marriage service it is evident that the gift-marriage was formerly a ceremony occurring just prior to the consummation. The causes for the later custom of much earlier gift-marriage were not at all sexual, but social. It is evident that this earlier ceremony was instituted in dangerous times, so that the girls might have the protection of the husband's family in case of any disaster befalling the father's family.

Dr. Annie Besant, who has long studied

* *Quoted in Wake up, India.* A. Besant, p. 47.

these matters, has not minimized the evils of child marriage when speaking of the Hindus, but she has traced the trouble to its source, which is not in the traditions and desires of the Hindus, but in economic conditions. She quotes the remarks of the Census Report to the effect that the Aryan forbear of the present day Brâhman stood for a civilization and morality far above those of the Dravidian peoples with whom, even as a leader, he had to associate himself. She affirms that the premature marrying of the early Aryan was then due to his desire to safeguard the purity of his race and the morality of his daughter, by securing for her a husband within her own community at the earliest possible moment, and certainly not to his imitation of the customs of those inferior races.

Next came the dangers connected with conquest of the country after India became a prey to foreign invasion; it was then natural that a father should desire to gain for his daughter another protector, one to whom she could turn if the father's home were broken up or raided.

But the great reason for the preservation of early marriage in India in these modern days, when it has been abandoned almost

everywhere else, is the gradual lowering of the social status of Hindu women following the gradual decrease of their education, due to the disappearance of village schools.

> As she lost her position of social and civic equality, as her education became more neglected and her faculties were not trained, invariably she sank to a lower position and was no longer looked upon as the equal of the man she married. Then inevitably also, the earlier marriage of the girl brought about the earlier marriage of the boy.*

Wherever educational facilities are provided for the girls the tendency is for the marriage age to rise.

Professor A. A. Macdonell gives another reason for the growth of child-marriage. He says it was undoubtedly due to the increasing difficulty of securing suitable husbands belonging to the same caste as the daughter. Incidentally he tells us that the marriage age is not now so very low, for: "In 1921 the average age of marriage (*i.e.*, of the first ceremony, or betrothal) in Bengal was about twelve and a half for girls and rather under twenty for men."†

* *Wake up, India*, p. 63.

† *India's Past*, A. A. Macdonell, p. 79.

We cannot, however, ignore still another fact—that the Hindus mostly disapprove of young people making their selections of partners by what they would regard as passion. They think that a young man ought not to go about weighing up all the girls and regarding many of them as possible partners. The same idea, of course, applies to the girls in their selection of life-partners. They think that it is much better that the parents with calm wisdom should get together and make the arrangements for the young people.

It must be added that at present the young people acquiesce in this ; they are quite satisfied that things should be arranged in this way. We are almost all ruled by the customs of our respective countries, and this, which would seem so startling a proposition to our modern young people, seems quite as it should be to the youths and maidens of India.

There is no mystery of sex to excite the young people in India. While they are quite young boys and girls know all about the manner of our coming into the world. There is no secrecy or prudery about the matter. Babies up to several years old usually wear no clothing at all in the warm season, so sex differences are quite familiar to all. If the

young man thinks of these things, he contemplates the future, when he will have started upon his household life with the partner destined for him. He feels generally that his elders will make the best choice they can, considering circumstances and opportunities.

I have several times heard a Hindu say to a European: "You fall in love before marriage; we afterwards." There can be no doubt that this matter of falling in love is not quite as spontaneous as most Western people think. This is shown in the fact that generally men do not allow themselves to fall in love with girls who are already engaged to others.

I hope I have made it clear that prevailing Western opinions on the wide-spread character of sex-excitement and the constant necessity for sex-satisfaction do not represent the normal, permanent and universal conditions of human life in this matter. The appetite has sometimes been worked up very unnaturally by imagination. It is possible for large numbers of people belonging to other nations to have quite a different outlook. Being sceptical about the possibilities and advantages of self-control, we have in England now a wide-spread custom of the use of contraceptives, which has brought the birth-rate down to what



Dr. Rabindranath Tagore—The Poet & Essayist.

Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.

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Miss Gohar—Famous Film Actress.

Photo by Pandit, Bombay

is sometimes said to be the lowest figure in the world, much to the alarm of our politicians and nationalists. Our Hindu friends look upon this practice with horror, as a mode of encouraging the indulgence of appetite in an excessive and unnatural manner, involving no self-control and self-restraint whatsoever, and tending to injure both the character and the stamina of any race, and to ruin the race in all respects if it is continued long enough. Be this opinion right or wrong, there it is at the present time. Yet I am sure there are plenty of continent bachelors and spinsters in America and Britain. It is therefore quite natural that Hindu men and maidens should have such sex-psychology as would permit them to leave the selection of their partners in the hands of their parents.

I think I can almost reproduce the words of a young Indian with whom I was talking comparatively recently on this very point. He lived in Delhi. There many women, dressed in their white morning clothes, go down to the river Jumna to bathe in the early hours of the day. This young man told me how the sight of the ladies used to affect his thoughts and those of his companions. He said:

"We used to look at them with great

wonder and reverence at their beauty. They seemed like beings from another world. They were spiritual, like fairies. Nothing except my morning prayers could ever produce in me such calm and peaceful thoughts."

When I questioned him closely about these matters he told me that perhaps some of the youths would have some sex thoughts, but that these were never directed to what they called "our own women", but only to prostitutes. But even then he said it was rare for one of them to approach the prostitutes, because of the shame that would be brought upon him.

My friend said, "You cannot in India do things like that, except in a very few large cities, without its becoming known. In your big cities, a man in one room in a house scarcely knows who lives in the next room, and vice is easy; but with us it is very difficult."

Further in the conversation he said, "When we are speaking to the ladies of our own class we call them 'Sister', and when you use the word 'sister' you cannot think of sex things."

I have known many hundreds of students in India, ranging up to the age of about twenty-four and they have seemed to me a

very fine lot of boys from the moral point of view, with as low a percentage of base thoughts as you could find anywhere in the world.

I am strongly of the opinion that habits of thought have a lot to do with these matters. I believe that in the age of prudery out of which we have recently emerged in Europe and America, sex thoughts and sex passions were at their worst. The mode of our coming into the world was kept secret from boys and girls. Sex was surrounded with mystery. What excitement there was if a lady's skirt should blow so as to show her ankle! What abominable stories were recounted among men! We have come out of it, just as we have come out of that period when it was fashionable for gentry to drink heavily, and a common phrase was "as drunk as a Lord". I am sure that the minds of our young people in these days of free intercourse, short skirts, and such things are cleaner, and thought is less morbid than it was thirty years ago.

To understand India and the Indian mind we must be prepared to mingle with those people, putting aside for the time being all our own preconceptions, and letting ourselves see things with their eyes. In India, prudery has had no place, the functions of love and genera-

tion have always been regarded as in the same natural order as those of breathing and eating, and I believe therefore that there is not and has not been in India among the young people such a tendency to sex excitement as has been prevalent in the West.

To me it has appeared that the Hindus are an abstemious race in all respects, notwithstanding the fact that widespread poverty tends to encourage the enjoyment of the one kind of pleasure that men can take on credit. I am sure that there is relatively little prostitution, and that the *sannyâsîs* and widows are, in the main, pure.

I well remember the advice of an old Brahman friend, given to me on the day of my own marriage, which took place in India. He said, with all the closeness of Hindu friendship: "Will you not follow the method often pursued among us, to abstain from sexual intercourse for at least two years after marriage? That method leads to children of purity instead of passion." A well-known Indian scientist, now an elderly man, told me that though his wife joined him when he was fourteen, they did not cohabit until he was eighteen, though they slept together. Some are more self-controlled than others, of course,

but I believe on the whole the Hindus stand high in this respect.

Early marriage is indubitably one of the things in which India is behind most of the other great countries of the world. It was common enough even in England two hundred years ago, and I suppose even now in Spain and Italy, marriage at the age of fifteen is not extremely rare. Marriage at the age of seventeen, eighteen and nineteen was not very uncommon in England two generations ago.

On the other hand it is quite possible for civilized nations to get their young people into such a disadvantageous economical position that they actually marry later than is advisable, and in the meantime sometimes disturb their physiological economy to some extent. In some cases married people postpone the production of offspring, but not their indulgence, for economic reasons, sometimes with the result that they remain childless. In Britain to-day there are one and a half millions of childless families, in only half of which is the condition voluntary. In India that error is not often likely to occur, because of the joint-family system and the fact that the son is not expected to make his own separate living before he marries.

Whenever we consider the relatively early marriages of southern Europeans, we ought to take into account the fact that their bodies mature more rapidly than those of the northern peoples. We must not leave this out of account in considering the Indian branch of our race, which has for thousands of years dwelt in the tropics, and has also to some extent mixed with the earlier races belonging to those climates. It has been contended that on these grounds we must compare a girl of fifteen in India with one of seventeen in England.

Again, ages in India are not quite so carefully watched and noted as among us. Sometimes I would ask a student how old he was. "Oh," he would say, "about seventeen, or sixteen, or perhaps fifteen." Somewhere in the family records there is a correct figure, but exactitude in this matter is not considered important. This bears on our present question, because there are many fathers of families who are anxious to marry their daughters later than custom has been demanding, and they sometimes make use of this looseness to understate the girls' ages. Sometimes, therefore, statistics relating to these matters express the ages as somewhat lower

than they really are. The figures given in the Census of India Report show that 60 per cent. of the girls of India of the age of 15 are still unmarried. As to the men, 70 per cent. are still unmarried at the age of 20.

I do not wish to minimize the objectionable features of child marriage, but I do want to state the case fairly, and it is evident that that has not been done by Miss Mayo. My Hindu friends would not wish me to shut my eyes to the evil. Indeed, great numbers of them are trying to fight their way out of this custom. Various societies concerned with social reform have been working at the matter for a long time, and have greatly advanced the marriage age. In some Indian States it has been advanced by law. For example, in the States of Baroda and Kashmir the law stands that no man can marry under the age of eighteen and no woman under the age of fourteen.

The following resolution on child-marriage was adopted on Women's Day at the Swarâj Congress of 1927, when at least three thousand women were present:

> This meeting emphatically condemns the unnatural and devitalizing custom of allowing immature and uneducated girl-children to

become the mothers of India. It calls on the central government and the provincial legislative councils to follow the precedent set by the Indian States of Baroda, Kashmir, Rajkot, Mysore, Gondal and Indore, which have raised the legal age of marriage. This meeting demands that the legal age of marriage for girls be made sixteen and for boys twenty-one.

This resolution may be considered to represent the desire of all the advanced sections of the Hindus for many years. Such agitation has at last resulted in the passing by a large majority of a Bill* which makes it a criminal offence to take part in the marriage of a girl below the age of fourteen. There may be some breaking of the law in connection with this, but it will at the very least make it easy for those who wish to do so to set aside the old custom. Opinion is, of course, divided as to the sanctions of religion in this matter ; it is possible to quote variously from the old books. In Baroda State some exemptions are permitted, as in the case of the Gola community, whose ancient custom has been to conduct their marriage ceremonies only every thirteenth year. Cases of infraction of the law in that state are numerous, but they have brought

*In force from April, 1930.

in a substantial revenue from fines, which is spent mainly upon maternity welfare and scholarships and physical education for girls.

Miss Mayo has made numerous misleading assertions about husbands. She says that the husband "may be a child scarcely older than herself, or may be a widower of fifty." Yes, he *may* be, but he is not likely to be, because generally he is not either of these.

We have already noted that in Bengal, a province noted for early marriage, the average age of gift-marriage is twelve and a half for girls and rather under twenty for men. Generally the husband is six or seven years older than the wife in the case of early marriage. I could say, for example, in one of the schools with which I was connected, that out of some thirty students in the matriculation class three or four of the older boys were married, and their ages averaged nineteen. I think their wives would have been about fourteen years old. With one exception, these were gift-marriages, not consummations. It is absurd to try to make the case worse by saying that the husband as well as the wife is immature.

It is true that there are some very bad cases of old men marrying young girls.

While the custom stands as it does at the present time with respect to widow-remarriage, that is bound to be the case, but it is a diminishing practice, and will probably come to an end before long. But certainly as far as the young husbands are concerned, the age at which they consummate their marriage is usually one at which their vitality is not low. This I mention in reply to Miss Mayo's humorous announcement that "in any case, whether from immaturity or from exhaustion, he has small vitality to transmit."*

Miss Mayo takes a fling at Rabindranath Tagore and in her haste misunderstands his article "The Indian Ideal of Marriage" which appears in Keyserling's *Book of Marriage*. She makes out that he "explains child-marriage as a flower of the sublimated spirit, a conquest over sexuality and materialism won by exalted intellect for the eugenic uplift of the race." She adds that "his conclusion implies the conviction that Indian women must be securely bound and delivered before their womanhood is upon them if they are to be kept in hand. In other words, a woman must be married before she knows she is one." †

**Mother India*, p. 22.
†*Ibid*, p. 46.

This has called forth indignant protests from various quarters, including the poet himself and Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi says in an article in *Young India*:

> The authoress has violated all sense of propriety by associating the Poet's name with child-marriage. The Poet has indeed referred to early marriage as not an undesirable institution. But there is a world of difference between child-marriage and early marriage. If she had taken the trouble of making the acquaintance of the free and freedom-loving girls and women of Shantiniketan, she would have known the Poet's meaning of early marriage.*

In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* Rabindranath Tagore himself wrote a very indignant repudiation of the opinions which she ascribed to him. He says that one might as well accuse the late President Wilson of having expressed his pious conviction that the lynching of negroes was a moral necessity in a superior civilization for cultivating Christian virtues. Rabindranath Tagore is opposed to child-marriage, but Miss Mayo has quoted him so as to make it appear that he thinks there cannot be morality without it.

* *Young India*, Sept. 15, 1927. Shantiniketan is Dr. Tagore's school at Bholpur.

CHAPTER III

MOTHERHOOD

Man's all-wise Maker, wishing to create
A faultless form, whose matchless symmetry
Should far transcend Creation's choicest works,
Did call together by his mighty will,
And garner up in his eternal mind,
A bright assemblage of all lovely things:—
And then, as in a picture, fashion them
Into one perfect and ideal form.
Such is the divine, the wondrous prototype,
Whence her fair shape was moulded into being.

Shakuntala.

MISS Mayo declares that: "The Indian girl, in common practice, looks for motherhood nine months after reaching puberty—or anywhere between the ages of fourteen and eight. The latter age is extreme, although in some sections not exceptional; the former is well above the average."*

This is entirely wrong. The figures which

**Mother India*, p. 22.



A Daughter of India—High Caste.

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A Daughter of India—Low Caste.
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I have given in Chapter II as to the age of gift-marriage show that. I do not know whether a girl could be a mother at eight, but I do know that it has been a penal offence in India for the last thirty-six years to have intercourse with a girl below the age of twelve, married or unmarried. If Miss Mayo came across any cases below that age I think she ought to have reported them to the police.

Let us notice also the statement recently made in *The Times of India* by Dr. M. I. Balfour of Bombay. It shows the result of two years' work, in which she had been studying the matter for the sake of maternity and infant welfare work. She writes that of 304 Hindu mothers delivered of their first babies on the Bombay Maternity Hospital the average age was 18·7. 85·6 per cent. were 17 years or over ; 14·4 per cent. were below 17 ; 14 was the youngest and there were three of that age. The reports of the Madras Maternity Hospital for the years 1922-24 show that 2,312 mothers were delivered there of their first babies ; the average age was 19·4 ; 86·2 per cent. were 17 years or over and 13·8 per cent. were below 17 ; 13 was the youngest age and there were 7 mothers aged 13.

Some one has asked whether these figures

might not represent the most enlightened part of the community. I have no means at present of answering that question. It seems probable that there may be a bigger proportion of cases of earlier motherhood outside those hospitals, though we can offset against that the probability that many of the more difficult cases would be likely to be taken to the hospital. In the hospital Miss Mayo visited there seem to have been women of every class. Strictly, however, the figures are not of great importance, once we are assured that the standard is well above fourteen, and that must be the case, since even gift-marriage averages above that. I think we have demolished Miss Mayo's irresponsible assertion that motherhood usually occurs nine months after puberty, and that fourteen is well above the average age for this.

Although we have established the fact that first motherhood must be far above the age of fourteen, since the average age of even gift-marriage is well beyond it, I agree with the Indian reformers that custom does place motherhood too early. It ought not to be required before the mother's body is fully grown.

This early motherhood does undoubtedly result in much suffering and many deaths.

This must be especially the case where there is at the same time the excessive pressure of poverty, which is very common in India. Yet here, once more, there is no virtue in exaggeration. I have myself been frequently in Hindu family houses. Quite usually, after the evening meal, all the ladies would gather with us, and would entertain us with music, singing and conversation. I cannot recollect ever having seen any mothers under these circumstances who were obviously undeveloped, nor was I aware that they were generally very weak or frail.

I notice that Mr. Alden Clark's experience was somewhat similar to my own. He says that when he and his wife first saw the village women of western India in 1914 they were surprised by the fine physical development and carriage of most of them. He adds that many of their American visitors expressed the same idea, and he points out very aptly that the illustrations throughout Miss Mayo's book fail to indicate a weakly race.

Mr. Clark then quotes Risley and Gait, the joint authors of the census of 1901, as follows:

> No one who has watched the sturdy Jat women lift their heavy water jars at the

village well is likely to have any misgiving as to the effect of their marriage system on the physique of the race.........Among the Rajputs both sexes are of slighter build than the Jats, but here again there are no signs of degeneration.*

On his own account Mr. Clark adds that the statement that there are in India millions of weak girls is an awful fact, but that there are also millions of strong, healthy girls is also a fact testified by the census figures and by many observers.

Mr. Harold Begbie, writing in *The Light of India* on some of the very lowest classes in India, among whom the Salvation Army is doing splendid work, does not admire the men, but:

> The women, on the other hand, struck me as handsome, if fierce and tigerish creatures—tall and vigorous women who held their heads splendidly, walked like goddesses, and flashed great eyes of confident self-approval at any stranger who presumed to gaze at them.

Mr. William Archer's description of Indian people also agrees with my experience and that of Mr. Clark:

> There is no part of India which does not pro-

***Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. 1928, p. 274.



Muhammadan Girls.

Page 56 *Ewing Galloway, N. Y.*



Eating by Hand

Page 57. *Ewing Galloway N. Y.*

duce a considerable percentage of notably fine men—fine in stature, in features, in facial angle, in physical development—and is there any country in Europe for which a larger claim can be advanced? The military pageants of recent years have made Londoners familiar with the magnificent specimens of humanity who abound in our Sikh, Punjabi, Rajput, Maratha, and Pathan regiments; but these might be assumed to be picked men. They were, no doubt, exceptional in the sense that they were well fed and athletically trained; but the raw material of such men abounds in every Indian village.

As for the women of India, is not their grace proverbial? In the North (under Muhammadan influence, I presume) they often contrive to conceal it by wearing hideous trousers; but in the South every girl who drapes herself in her *sari*, and goes forth to the well with her shining brass pitcher on her head, is a model for either sculptor or painter—perfect in contour, brilliant and yet harmonious in colouring. It is true that their grace is short-lived, and that they age before their time; but it is also true that the children whom they carry astride on their hips are often divinely beautiful.*

***India and the Future*, p. 25.*

There are other causes besides early marriage for frailty in women. Lack of exercise and unhygienic clothing often contribute, but on the whole Indian women have been rather free from these. Ball games are frequently mentioned in the old literature, and there are dances such as that known as *kolattam* in South India, among the girls. The household and other tasks of the poorer classes involve a considerable amount of movement of all kinds.

There has apparently been nothing at all among the sensible people of India to be compared with the practice of tight lacing, which was for long prevalent in Europe, or with the foot-binding of China. Customs can be dreadfully cruel and injurious. The standard of height and physique of white women has increased very much in the last two generations on account of the abandonment of several old customs in dress and the introduction of healthy games and exercises among the girls, as well as because of a freer life generally. Great strides have been made in a very short time in this respect. A similar change may be expected in India before long.

We will not try to minimize the terrible fact, which Miss Mayo emphasizes, that

3,200,000 mothers (one-fiftieth of the entire female population of India) in each generation die in child-birth. Yet this must not be ascribed entirely to the fact that many people still consummate the marriage too soon, but even more to the extreme poverty of the people, of whom 60,000,000 have never had a full meal in their lives. This poverty puts an extra strain upon any girls so unfortunately placed that they are called upon to bear the burden of motherhood before their bodies are fully grown.

That this is not due only to early motherhood is shown by the fact that there is not a vastly disproportionate number of deaths of girls about the age of fourteen. This is evident from the figures for 1926 given for the Province of Bengal by Dr. Bentley, Director of Public Health, which were as follows:

Less than one year old	152,000
From one to five years old	158,000
From five to ten years old	87,000
From ten to fifteen years old	50,000

Dr. Bentley estimated that from sixty to seventy thousand mothers died either in child-birth or in conditions directly related thereto. These mothers could not have been to any special extent between ten and fifteen years old.

Great efforts have been made of recent

years to raise by law the Age of Consent within the marriage bond. One such Bill was defeated two years ago. With regard to that, Miss Mayo says:

> The Bill raising the Age of Consent to fourteen was finally thrown out, buried under an avalanche of popular disapproval.*

The error of this assertion was shown by the Secretary of the Women's Indian Association, who pointed out that the awakened women of India have, for the past ten years, through their organizations, been asking the Government to raise the Age of Consent, and the Social Reform Conferences have been doing the same since Raja Ram Mohan Roy's day. Ten thousand women from one district alone sent a petition to the Government to raise the Age of Consent, and the representatives of over 7,000 more women, who had assembled to discuss educational reform, also asked Government to enact legislation making marriage before 16 years old for a girl a penal offence. On the other hand there was not a meeting held all over India to express disapproval of the raising of the Age of Consent. The Secretary writes:

> The facts of the matter were that on the first

**Mother India*, p. 38.

voting on the Bill the section referring specifically to the raised age was passed by a majority of two, against Government opposition, and it was disagreement regarding the amount of punishment, and assembly tactics, that broke the majority for the Bill as a whole.

If the British members of the Assembly had supported the Bill, girls of 14 would not now be legally approved mothers. We, women, definitely charge the British Government with delaying reforms for which the people of the country are ripe.*

Mr. P. Sapru writing on the same subject in *The Leader* explained that the position of the Government was one of extreme caution, and that it was not even prepared to accept an amendment which would have raised the Age of Consent outside the marital relationship to 15, for an analysis of the voting upon the Bill showed that a majority of the Hindu members voted for it and it was defeated by the British official votes. With the exception of Mr. Chalmers, all the unofficial Europeans, including Sir Willoughby Carey, Colonel Crawford, Sir Henry Stanyon, and the Rev. Dr. MacPhail also voted against it.

It must not be assumed that the British

******The Modern Review*, Nov. 1927.

members broke the above mentioned Bill without thoroughly good motive. They were afraid that if such a law was passed a certain number of people would break the law, in somewhat the same manner as people break the Eighteenth Amendment in the United States, and they did not wish the law to be brought into disrepute. I do not think these people understand India very well. At all events the raising of the age of marriage by law in Baroda and other States does not reflect this sort of fear.

It is asserted again and again that wherever there is progress it is due to Western influences, and that the Indians stand in the way of reform. This is contrary to all the evidence. Miss Mayo quotes from the debates in the Legislative Assembly. But wherever you find a Hindu statement that is timid or reactionary, you will always find another which is very decisively the reverse. A few members think that progress may best be left to the gradual growth of public opinion stimulated and assisted by unofficial organizations. There are thus many differences of opinion as to how the reforms should be brought about, but there are few to say that they should not be brought about.

For example, Miss Mayo quotes with great satisfaction from a speaker from the North-West Frontier, who shows an extraordinary amount of ignorance, as well as a great lack of confidence in the morals of the people. He says:

> You allow a young couple to be married and to live together and give them the opportunity of sharpening their sexual appetite, and then prevent them by law from having their natural intercourse simply because they have not reached a certain age............Suppose this law (to raise the Age of Consent) is enacted, and the young couple are prevented from having intercourse, I should think that in the majority of cases you would thus be sending the young boy into the streets.*

As I have already explained, the girl-wives, who are only betrothed, remain in their fathers' houses, sometimes long after puberty.

I prefer the speeches of Hindus like Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, who said: "The fact that a so-called marriage rite precedes the commission of a crime does not and cannot justify that crime."† Or again that of Rai Sahib M. Harbilas Sarda, who said: "Where

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**Mother India*, p. 42.

† *Ibid*, p. 38.

a social custom or a religious rite outrages our sense of humanity or inflicts injustice on a helpless class of people, the Legislature has a right to step in."*

Miss Mayo excuses the timidity of the Government members on the ground that any attempt on the part of the Government "to run counter to the Indian tenets as to religious duties, religious prohibitions and god-given rights has ever meant the eclipse of Indian reason in madness, riot and blood."

The Indian Government no doubt knows that anything distinctly counter to the Hindu religion would be resisted and disobeyed by Hindu people, but in all the history of the British Government in India there has never been one case of the eclipse of Indian reason in madness, riot and blood. If there is a tacit allusion here to the Sepoy Rebellion one must ask the reader to peruse Mr. Thompson's *The Other Side of the Medal* before forming his judgment.

Recent history has shown that the bulk of the Indians incline, when necessary, more to passive resistance or "soul-force" than to violence. Only by the slenderest margin did Mr. Gandhi fail to arouse the entire country

Ibid, p. 39.

in his great boycott movement of recent years. There was some violence here and there in connection with the enforcement of hartals (the closing of shops and stoppage of conveyances on days of "mourning") and some interference with private people on account of their political opinions, but these were the work of roughs contrary to the advice of the leaders, and damaging to their cause.

It is absurd to pretend that Indians are not working for social reforms. There were, for example, many organizations behind Mr. Harbilas Sarda's Prevention of Child Marriage Bill. He stated:

> Women's Conferences and Associations and ladies' meetings in all parts of India have without a single dissentient voice supported the Bill. Many of them go further and desire that the minimum marriageable age for the girls should be raised to sixteen.
>
> The Indian Social Conference and the All-India Aryan Congress, the two most important Social Conferences in India, have strongly supported the Bill. Caste and Communal Conferences, such as the All-India Maheshwari Conference, the All-India Gour Brahmin Conference, the Kurim Conference, the All-India Agarwal Conference, have all supported the Bill.

Though a few Marwaris in Calcutta and Bombay have opposed the Bill, yet as the All-India Maheshwari Sabha, the Marwari Chamber of Commerce, Bombay, the Bihar and Orissa Agarwal Conference, the All-India Marwari Agarwal Conference, the Bengal Provincial Agarwal Mahasabha, and the Calcutta Marwari Trades' Association whole-heartedly support the Bill, it is clear that even the Marwaris as a body support it.*

This work on the part of Indians is not new. Mr. Mukerji remarks: "I must say that fifty years ago when our social reformers such as Vidyasagar and Keshub Chandra Sen took up the cause of the girl-wives, things were probably bad in Bengal, Behar and Orissa. But, thanks to the start given by them half a century ago, the age of the girl-wives has been going up from year to year."†

On the subject of the evils of child-marriage, Miss Mayo instances the case of Mr. Gandhi who, she says, "has recorded that he lived with his wife, as such, when he was thirteen years old." Mr. Gandhi does not hesitate to strike at any social abuses or

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**New India*, Feb. 9th, 1928.

†*A Son of Mother India Answers*, p. 24.

defects of which he knows, and even to use his own experience as an illustration.

Wherever Miss Mayo can use the words of an Indian reformer who is attacking evils in his own country she does so, not to assist the reformer in stamping out whatever there may be of that evil, but to make it appear that the whole country is saturated with it. As to this point Mr. Gandhi says: "She has done me the honor of quoting me frequently in support of her argument. Any person who collects extracts from a reformer's diary, tears them from their context and proceeds to condemn, on the strength of these, the people in whose midst the reformer has worked, would get no hearing from sane and unbiassed readers or hearers."

Mr. Gandhi stands for a saintly India and he works for it and speaks for it like a hero. He denounces child-marriage in no measured terms, declares that it is sapping the vitality of thousands of promising boys and girls on whom the future of Hindu society entirely rests, that it is bringing into existence every year thousands of weaklings who are born of immature parenthood, and so on.

Taking these words along with the statistics we have already given as to ages of first

motherhood and of gift-marriage, it will be seen that Mr. Gandhi is not supporting Miss Mayo's claim that India reeks with criminal vice, but is speaking of the thousands of cases of motherhood which occur within legal limits but still before the body of the mother is fully grown.

Miss Mayo tries to make capital out of a reply which Mr. Gandhi printed in his paper, containing the following argument:

> The chief objection to early marriage is that it weakens the health of the girl and her children. But this objection is not very convincing for the following reasons. The age of marriage is now rising among the Hindus, but the race is becoming weaker. Fifty or a hundred years ago the men and women were generally stronger, healthier and more long-lived* than now. But early marriage was then more in vogue . . . . From these facts it appears probable that early marriage does not cause as much physical deterioration as some people believe . . . .†

*In 1890 the expectation of life was 33·2 years; now it is 22·5. In 1880 one rupee would buy 12 *seers* of rice; in 1925 only 5. The consumption of cloth per head has also fallen from 13 to 9 yards.

†*Mother India*, p. 60.

Miss Mayo's remark upon this is as follows:

> The type of logic employed in the paragraph last quoted is so essentially Indian that its character should not be passed by without particular note. The writer sees no connection between the practice of the grandparents and the condition of the grandchildren, even though he sets both down in black and white on the paper before him.

Let us go a step further and enquire: if the people can decline so much in fifty years on account of child-marriage through three generations, what must they have deteriorated in the several hundreds of years during which it has been going on? They must have been a fine race when they began it, or there would be nothing left by now! There is another cause of present deterioration—poverty.

When all this work of the reformers is going on, it is unfair to say that "forced up by Western influences the subject of child-marriage has been much discussed of late years, and a sentiment of uneasiness concerning it is perceptibly rising in the Indian mind." The social reform organizations in India have been working at this matter for considerable time, with steadily advancing success. In many

different classes and castes in India, numbering in total nearly 200 millions of people, marriage later than the age of sixteen is now the rule.

Such work as this surely proves that the Indians do want these reforms and have confidence that legislation will be effective. It is trivial to accuse these workers of being content with the mere empty passing of a law, and it is both cruel and false to make a statement such as the following :—

> Few or none of the Indian parliamentarians dispute the theoretical wisdom of postponing motherhood until the maturity of the mother; but all agree that it is impossible to effect such a result without prohibiting the marriage of girls of immature age. Yet this they say, with one accord, cannot be done—and for three reasons ;
>
> First, because immutable custom forbids, pre-marital pubescence being generally considered among Hindus, a social if not a religious sin.
>
> Second, because the father dare not keep his daughter at home lest she be damaged before she is off his hands. And this especially in joint-family households, where several men and boys—brothers, cousins, uncles—live under the same roof,
>
> Third, because the parents dare not expose

the girl, after her dawning puberty, to the pressure of her own desire unsatisfied.*

That all agree with one accord to these three propositions is absolutely false. The statement is wrong in a dozen different places. The fact that daughters are frequently kept at home until considerably after the time mentioned is shown by the ages of marriage and of first motherhood which I have mentioned. And Miss Mayo's third proposition would also suggest that it is unsafe for the widows to live in their late husband's or their fathers' homes, which is not the case.

*_Ibid_, p. 36.

CHAPTER IV

CHILD-BIRTH

Where the Gods are, or thy Teacher,
  In the face of Pain and Age,
Cattle, Brahmans, Kings and Children—
  Reverently curb thy rage.

Hitopadesa.

IN order that we may "visualize the effects of child-marriage", Miss Mayo takes us to a women's hospital. She describes the worst cases that she could find in the most vivid terms. There is of course no objection to this, as long as they are well authenticated and it is not pretended that these are normal cases.

Miss Mayo proceeds to tell us about four cases which she saw or of which she was told. I will enumerate these.

(1) A case of a young wife, who had been infected with gonorrhœa, which had utterly destroyed the pelvic organs.

(2) The case of a child-wife in her second

confinement, suffering at the same time from heart-disease, asthma and a broken leg. This poor girl, who was said to be 13 years and a few months old, gave birth to dead twins. The husband a Hindu official.

(3) Another case, a girl whose "internal wounds were alive with maggots"; not yet thirteen years old. Husband fifty years old.

(4) Another poor little girl said to be 10 years old (not in the same hospital), whose brain had given way and whose husband, being unable to get any satisfaction out of her, however much he beat her, had, it was said, "slung her small body over his shoulder, carried her out to the edge of the jungle, cast her in among the scrub thicket and left her there to die."*

In the last case, the story continues, an English lady found the child, brought her into the hospital, where she was gradually, in the course of a year and four months, converted into a romping happy girl contentedly hugging a doll.

Miss Mayo takes us thus to the "Kali Ghat" of hospitals, as she did to the Kali Ghat of Calcutta. After recounting the four cases which I have briefly listed above, she makes

*Mother India, p. 55.

one of her astounding but none the less characteristic statements:

> Bombay Presidency has an outstanding number of educated and progressive women, but the status of the vast majority in that province, as in the rest, would more fairly be inferred from the other extreme—from, for example, the wife whom I saw, mother at nine and a half, by Cæsarean operation, of a boy weighing one and three-quarter pounds.*

There is something very unbalanced about a person who can tell us that a mother of nine and a half, bearing a boy weighing one and three-quarter pounds, by Cæsarean operation, represents the status of a vast majority of women anywhere in the world.

Miss Mayo goes on to say that the conditions mentioned for the little north-eastern hospital are the same practically everywhere else. She quotes statements of, I think, three doctors in all. The first declared that her patients were largely the wives of university students and "practically every one is venereally affected."† The second stated that "for the vast majority of women, marriage is a physical tragedy. The girl may bring to

*_Ibid_, pp. 55-6.
†_Ibid_, p. 55.

birth one or two sound children, but is by that time herself ruined and crippled, either from infection or cruel handling. In the thousands of gynecological cases that I have treated and am still treating, I have never found a woman who had not some form of venereal disease."*

As to this Mr. S. Satyamurti replies:

> This is against all one's experience and is intended to blacken a whole community on the words of an ignorant British lady doctor. There can be no grosser example of the blind leading the blind.†

The third doctor said: "A very small percentage of Indian women seem to me to be well and strong. This state I believe to be accounted for by a morbid and unawakened mentality, by venereal infection, and by sexual exhaustion. They commonly experience marital use two and three times a day."

In all these stories and quotations not one name, either of a place or person is given. Also it does not appear that any attempt was made to bring the criminal cases cited to the attention of the police. It is an astonishing thing that no one should go after the man who threw his girl-wife into the jungle to die. I do

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**Ibid*, p. 57.

†*The Hindu*, Sept. 17, 1927.

not say that it did not happen, but I say that if it did happen, it does not, as Miss Mayo maintains, represent the general condition and standard of married life all over India.

Mr. D. G. Mukerji, objecting to these anonymous assertions, effectively points out that venereal infection did not exist in India when the people were left to themselves:

> Another vice that "civilization" brought us is syphilis.* That curse we received after the West discovered the sea-route to the East. It is working its havoc in those places in India where modern Western civilization holds its greatest sway. Distilleries, owned and maintained by Christian nations, through augmenting trade, have spread the blight of alcoholism in the East. Our doctors are struggling heroically with the abominations created by syphilis. But that is not enough. We must be enabled to fight alcohol and opium......
>
> The climax of charges is reached in the mention of nearly fourteen cases of outrage committed on young girls below twelve in 1891. Mind you, a dozen cases nearly forty years ago

***Reference Handbook of Medical Sciences*, p. 77: "The years 1493-1500 marked the introduction of syphilis throughout Europe, Asia and the Far East, following the voyages of discovery." See also Frederick Tice, M. D. in *Practice of Medicine*, vol. iii, p. 442.

in a country containing about three hundred million people!—What I sought and still am searching for is the exact number of cases of that kind in 1926. Instead of vivid phrasing we ask for the number of those certified by doctors.*

The fourteen cases of outrage mentioned by Mr. Mukerji as occurring nearly forty years ago are given in full by Miss Mayo. I do not think we need reproduce these revolting details. They range from seven to twelve years old. They were brought up in the debate in the Legislative Assembly by an Englishman who felt that their revival would add force to the Bill for raising the Age of Consent. He concluded his subject with the following words: "A number of persons........have said that this Bill is likely to give rise to agitation. No one dislikes agitation more than I do. I am sick of agitation. But when, Sir, it is a case of the lives of women and children, I can only say, in the words of the Duke of Wellington: 'Agitate and be damned!'"† But all his eloquence, all his recital of old horrors, all his agitation unfortunately could not induce the official members to support the Bill.

**A Son of Mother India Answers*, pp. 46-9.
†*Mother India*, p. 59.

Miss Mayo accuses the missionaries of hiding the unpleasant things of India, such as those mentioned above, partly because if they did not, their reports could not lie upon polite drawing-room tables in Europe and America, and partly because they are afraid of awakening the anger of the Indians themselves. But she says that she likes to call a spade a spade. The trouble is that she calls everything a spade, and a dirty spade at that.

Let us next consider the conditions of the women who do not go to hospitals, and see in what manner their children are ushered into the light of day. Miss Mayo introduces us to the Indian midwife, who is described as a most loathsome creature, her "elf locks" vermin infested, her "claws" dirty, her eyes festered and almost sightless, and the hand which she uses "encrusted with untold living contaminations". This entity has little knowledge, but a good deal of force. She kneads the patient with her fists; stands her up against the wall and butts her with her head; props her upright on the bare ground, seizes her hands and shoves against her thighs with gruesome bare feet until the patient's flesh is often torn to ribbons by the *dhai's* long, ragged toe-nails.*

**Ibid*, p. 95.

Most of these statements are made on the authority of the Victoria Memorial Scholarship Fund Report, though it is not directly quoted, and it is not said whether or not these descriptions are accumulated from special bits of testimony by particular witnesses.

I have, of course, no direct knowledge of this aspect of Indian life, but I had brought away with me from India a general impression that in the main child-bearing was very easy in that country, as compared with the same thing in England. It had seemed to me that mothers were very soon up and happy, and none the worse for their experience.

It cannot be doubted that the old midwife system is going out of date and is in many ways unscientific. It is not true, however, to say that "horrible dirty and ignorant women are the sole ministrants to the women of India in the most delicate, the most dangerous and the most important hour of their existence." Besides the midwives, the other women of the house certainly take part in the proceedings, especially the mother, who often goes from her own home to help her daughter.

However, I have learned from my Hindu friends that the *dhais* or midwives are never outcastes as Miss Mayo asserts. In many cases

they are Shudras, and in others they are of the caste of the expectant mother. Frequently they are widows, and sometimes married women with families. One of my friends belongs to the Kshattriya caste; the midwife employed in his family was also a Kshattriya.

The main body of the midwives are barbers' wives. The barbers among the old-fashioned or country people are still also the surgeons for small operations, as they used to be in Europe. In these matters they are often highly skilled. For example, one of my friends at Amritsar had an abscess in his mouth. He went with this to the Government doctor, who three times failed to relieve him. At last he went to a well-known "barber", whose business was entirely surgical. He cleared away the abscess, and my friend had no further trouble. The barbers' wives are as expert in midwifery as their husbands are in their line of work. They have also their apprentices.

These midwives are very particular to wash themselves and take an oil bath before attending a case. They frequently oil their hands and arms. They do not wear rings. If they have bangles, which the widows have not, these are pushed up the arm. As to the cutting of the umbilical cord, that is not done

by another woman but by the midwife herself, who keeps a special knife for the purpose, which is sterilized in hot water or in burning sunshine. Quite often if the barber in his morning rounds is at hand, he is called in to do it, for, as I have said, he also has the status of a surgeon. The midwife lives in the house, usually for three months.

Miss Mayo says that the expectant mother makes no preparation for the baby's coming —such as the getting ready of little garments. "This would be taking dangerously for granted the favor of the gods." This is silly, since in most places no "garments" are required, on account of the warmth of the sun. But worse follows: "But she may or does toss into a shed or into a small dark chamber whatever soiled and disreputable rags, incapable of further use, fall from the hands of the household during the year."* What this statement means is that the old *saris* and similar soft cloths are kept to be torn up as rags. They are carefully washed; indeed, so particular are the ladies that in many places after the cloths have been to the washerman they are hung in the sunlight and moonlight for a time in order to remove the foreign "magnetism".

* *Ibid.*, p. 92.

As to the room; it is specified in the *Bhava Prâkâsha*, a Sanskrit medical work much consulted and translated into the vernaculars, with long commentaries, that it shall be not less than four yards long and two yards wide, nice and pleasant and clean, and provided with a soft bed.

While on this matter I will summarize the other information as to the preparations given in the *Bhava Prâkâsha* and in common use. From the beginning the expectant mother must lead a pure life and keep a cheerful mind, must wear a white cloth, and think only of pleasant things. She must eat foods sweet, fatty, bland, light, and certain specially prepared things. She must not go hungry and must not eat too much. She must not work hard and must go to bed early. She must not look at or come in contact with dirty or malformed people. She must not hear unpleasant sounds or smell bad odours. All such things may injure the foetus. She must not speak loudly, take too much exercise, cohabit, be angry, sit alone in the house, sleep on a hard bed, rub oil on the body, or ever delay nature's calls. Care thus taken from the beginning results in easy delivery.

In due time the midwife comes, and gene-

rally stays in the house for three months. She must be a person whom the expectant mother likes, who has goodwill and is clever, whose nails are well kept and short, and who is soothing and patient.

It is a custom to limit the air in the room, lest the mother take a chill; this is sometimes done to excess and is being recognized as a mistake. A small fire is made in a pot and disinfectant incense is placed on this, which is put under the bed. At this point the expectant mother is asked to turn face downwards; the fragrant incenses are intended to soothe and help her. The smoke from burning snake-skin is considered good in serious cases. One thing which is not good, which is nevertheless customary, is that the mother is given a hot bath an hour after delivery, and afterwards every day. This is a concession to their excessive demand for cleanliness, but it is injurious. Both mother and child are carefully and skilfully massaged three times a day. Very great care is taken of the child, and the nose and nostrils are massaged twice a day with oil, so that it grows straight, with the result that Hindu children never have adenoids. The mother begins to move about after twelve days, but she is not allowed to do her ordinary work

for three months. It is said that the mother is deprived of food. This is not so; she is not given the usual meals with rice, but has cereals boiled with butter, sugar and milk.

On this subject, as on others, it cannot be doubted that Miss Mayo has collected the worst that she has heard, and has gathered the worst that she could find in the medical reports which she quotes, and brought these together as her picture of the way in which young Hindus are brought into the world. If her pictures represented the facts on all occasions, there would be no Hindu race left to-day. It could not have survived all these centuries. That Miss Mayo is making the most of the worst is shown in her account of the cutting of the umbilical cord:

> Sometimes it is a split bamboo that they use; sometimes a bit of an old tin can, or a rusty nail, or a potsherd or a fragment of broken glass. Sometimes, having no tool of their own and having found nothing sharp edged lying about, they go out to the neighbors to borrow. I shall not soon forget the cry: "Hi, there, inside! Bring me back that knife! I hadn't finished paring my vegetables for dinner."*

I wonder what language was spoken in

Ibid, p. 96.

this case. Was it English? And among what class of people did it occur?

All the actual cases mentioned by Miss Mayo are quoted from others. She was not present, except when somebody called for the vegetable knife, but she does tell us that the first midwife that she saw in action tossed some substance on a fire—some kind of incense, no doubt. She does not tell us in this case or any other case in her own experience that the delivery of the child was attended with any difficulties or incidents calling for special comment. I think if she had seen any such she would have given us a story of her own.

Miss Mayo makes a startling statement as to what is done to women who are about to die, the children being undelivered. In this case she tells us that the midwife "as in duty bound, sets to work upon precautions for the protection of the family." She says:

> First she brings pepper and rubs it into the dying eyes, that the soul may be blinded and unable to find its way out. Then she takes two long iron nails, and, stretching out her victim's unresisting arms—for the poor creature knows and accepts her fate—drives a spike straight through each palm fast into the floor. This is done to pinion the soul to the ground, to delay

its passing, so that it may not rise and wander, vexing the living. And so the woman dies, piteously calling to the gods for pardon for those black sins of a former life for which she now is suffering.*

We are told that this statement rests upon the testimony of many and unimpeachable medical witnesses. I can only say that it was the duty of those medical witnesses to inform the police about any such cruelty, and if they did not do so they are a party to its continuance. Also we should like to know how many cases have actually become known. None are known to any of my Hindu friends.

Ibid., p. 104.

CHAPTER V

CHILDHOOD

No other affection is equal to that for a child.

Panchatantra

THE women of India have not conducted the business of looking after babies for thousands of years without knowing anything about the matter. If they have not many periodicals giving instructions on these matters, such as have sprung up in the West in the last fifty years, it is due to the poverty of the country. Nevertheless, I notice that at least one vernacular magazine is quite up-to-date in this respect, as will be seen from the following review, which I have culled from an Indian newspaper:

> The December number of the *Griha Lakshmi*, a Marathi magazine, edited by Miss Tara Tilak, B.A., and Miss Piroja Anandkar, B.A., is a very fine issue of over 125 pages, printed on glazed

paper. It is called "Baby Number", as almost all the articles deal with the welfare of mothers and children. From Ruling Chiefs downwards, many have sent in photographs of their children to be put in the magazine, in compliance with a request from the Editors, and over 100 such pictures appear in the magazine. An index is given at the end giving the names and addresses of the children and their parents. The frontispiece gives a fine picture in five colors of an ideal mother holding her baby in her arms.

All this is very foreign to Miss Mayo's knowledge of India. She sums up the condition of the Indian baby in a few lines—"a feeble creature at best, bankrupt in bone-stuff and vitality, often venereally poisoned, always predisposed to any malady that may be afloat."*

I suppose this means there are none who are not feeble. Well, I have seen a number of small babies, even quite shortly after birth, and they did not strike me as "feeble at best". Some of them, anyhow, must undergo a great transformation in later years, for example, those who carry big loads on their heads through the streets of Madras, and those

*Mother India, p. 23.



A Young Indian.

Page 88. *Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.*



Another Young Indian.

Page 89

men and women who carry huge cabin trunks for the Europeans up the hillsides at places like Mussoorie and Kodaikanal, where they walk ten or twelve miles, rising as much as six thousand feet. A friend of mine told me that he saw one man carrying a grand piano on his head, though this is an extreme case.

My wife had something to do with the Baby Welcome Movement of the Women's Indian Association, where hundreds of babies of the lower classes come to have a bath and to be looked after in the mornings. She asserts that the majority of these babies did not seem particularly feeble. These, which we would call slum-children in England, were bright and cheerful on the whole, just like the three children in the picture facing page 162 of *Mother India*. There is, however, no systematic over-fattening of babies in India, but I understand that our own doctors are beginning to say that no very fat baby is really healthy.

The little baby, we are next told, must look to its mother for care. She is said to be ignorant of the laws of hygiene, guided only by superstitions, and without help except from older women, whose knowledge is little greater than her own. On top of this, matters of procreation are the one topic of interest and the

one subject of conversation, and therefore the poor child is injured by their conversation and "learns from earliest word and act to dwell upon sex relations."*

It is ridiculous to say that the women of the Indian households are dangerously ignorant in matters concerning health. Many a time has the lady of a house pulled me up short when I was about to drink a glass of cold water, and said, "No, wait a minute, you must eat some *pappadam* first." This is a kind of very thin biscuit containing a little pepper. And at meal times they are particular about the proportions of food which they give. They will not let you have a large quantity of curry with a small quantity of rice. I think it must be in consequence of the women's knowledge that one comes across so little indigestion among Indians.

In addition to a knowledge of the values and combinations of foods and of an extensive and highly pleasing repertory of Indian cookery, probably most of the ladies and even girls are familiar with Manu's rules of health in regard to eating, as follows:

> Give not the messed-up leavings of food to anyone. Eat not between the fixed and proper

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**Ibid*, p. 23.

meal times. Eat not again while the last meal remains undigested. Go not anywhere uncleansed after a meal. Anxiously avoid overeating; for it goes against health, against the functioning of the higher mind and therefore against the hopes of heaven; against the ways of the virtuous, for it breeds gross passions, and against the rules of propriety and equitable division of food amongst all in the world. Take the clean and bloodless foods as far as possible.*

Many of the herbal remedies of old time are also known to a large extent by the elderly ladies. It is therefore ridiculous to assume that there is no one to help with simple medicines when these become necessary.

Whatever backwardness there may be in connection with these matters in India may be ascribed to lack of money and of schools. India is in some ways behind the times as compared with countries like America and England, and cannot really make great progress until girls' schools teaching useful subjects are multiplied and made free all over the country. Still, there is much accumulated knowledge, which is handed on among the women.

India makes some mistakes; we make

Science of Social Organization, p. 300.

other mistakes, for which India might well criticise us. The report of the Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health in England for the last year shows that deaths from cancer have increased from 274 per million in 1847-50 to 1,362 per million in 1926, and that, "taking the two sexes together, the main incidence is on the digestive tract." An eminent surgeon remarks that this would suggest to any ordinary intelligence a definite association between the diseases of the intestinal canal and the food with which it has to deal, especially as cancer is a disease of civilization, practically unknown amongst native races, and that in his opinion wrong habits of feeding are responsible for many of the diseases of civilization, such as indigestion, appendicitis and rickets; while the prevalence of tuberculosis, diabetes and rheumatism are also undoubtedly connected with a faulty diet.

In the matter of child-bearing the same surgeon writes a severe criticism of our Western methods, which shows that babies may be as safe in Indian hands as in our own:

> Anyone familiar with the semi-savage native living under natural conditions knows that, apart from the invasion of minute organisms or worms which may exist in his blood, he leads a

healthy and vigorous life as a hunter or cultivator. The mother is also vigorous and perfectly adapted to child-bearing. She nourishes her child until it is able to digest the food customary to the parents. Substitutes for mother's milk are unknown. For these reasons the functioning of the intestines remains constant throughout life, as in the case of every other animal living under normal conditions. Their diet is perfectly simple, and is derived from the cultivation of the earth. Meat is very rarely eaten; indeed it is forbidden by some religions.

The disastrous ill-health and disease associated with civilization arise in the following manner. The civilized mother performs the functions of maternity with the greatest difficulty, too frequently involving serious weakness and permanent disability. She nurses her child very imperfectly, and only for a short time. In many cases, indeed, the child has to be brought up on artificial substitutes, none of which can properly replace the normal secretion of a healthy mother.

And at an early age the baby is taught to be "regular". It is impossible to exaggerate the evil effects of this terrible, artificial process, extending over the twenty-four hours. Nature, as in all cases, does her best to enable us to

meet any change in our mechanical relationship to our surroundings, but unfortunately at the expense of tending to shorten our lives. In no instance is this so lamentably true as it is in the changes which ensue when the end of the large bowel is compelled to give far more accommodation than it was ever meant to do. Nature usually develops membranes or bands which secure the intestine, opposing its elongation and distension. Sooner or later these bands, which at first serve a useful purpose, exert such control as to be an obstruction.

This acquired obstruction is far the most important evolutionary structure in the body which has ever been observed, and one that is productive of the most disastrous consequences. It would take quite a long time even to enumerate all the diseases that ensue in consequence of it. Amongst them are colitis, appendicitis, ulcer of the duodenum and stomach, gallstones, rheumatism, rheumatic gout, tubercle, Bright's disease, Addison's disease, disease of the heart and blood-vessels, apoplexy, diabetes, and last, but not least, that terrible scourge of civilization, cancer—the most incurable trouble of all.*

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*Sir Wm. Arbuthnot Lane, C.B., M.B., F.R.C.S. *How to be Healthy Though Civilized.*

A case of ignorance in our Western civilization which might easily be written up in dramatic form is given in a little book entitled *Nature's Way,* by Mr. Reddie Mallett. He tells his story as follows :—

> It was a tragedy which drew my attention to the subject of right feeding. A healthy child was born to me, and I endured the agony of seeing it wither to a shadow, while I remained ignorant of the cause of its decline until too late. Wrong feeding had brought that sturdy little life to the verge of the grave. Water from unboiled barley,*—that is to say, uncooked starch—added to dirtily-prepared cow's milk (and that, too, in excess), had brought about flatulence, to rectify which raw cane sugar† was given to that infant of a few days old. Diarrhœa and constipation being next set up, the tiny bowels were purged with castor

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*" It is not desirable to dilute the milk with barley water before the seventh month, because of the starch that is contained therein, and which the infant, till this time, is unable to convert into sugar "—that is to say, grape sugar, a natural substance, as distinct from manufactured sugar, which is particularly harmful for children. *Handbook for Midwives*, by Comyns Berkeley.

†" Cane sugar sets up fermentation, with the result that very poisonous substances may be formed, causing severe vomiting, diarrhœa, and perhaps the death of the infant."

oil and racked with enemas, until a prolapsed bowel ensued, and finally atrophy of the bowel and gastritis,* to rectify which condensed milk and gray powders were administered. Worse rapidly succeeded bad, and the little sufferer was given up to die. Then a second medical man declared, while the little one lay before him literally *in extremis*, that wrong treatment had brought about a state of sheer starvation—starvation because the digestion of food had been prevented—and by a course of rational treatment, he gently fanned that merest spark of life into brightness day by day, until after nearly a couple of months, the child was again being taken into the open air, right feeding having all but won the victory.'†

I think I have shown that Miss Mayo has little ground for a wholesale attack on Indian mothers. When she takes up the subject of female infanticide we find similar ignorance. She opens the subject with a confidential statement made by one of the chief officials of a Prince's household. He tells Miss Mayo that

*"Drugging for constipation is altogether wrong. Find the cause of the constipation and treat that, and it will generally be found that the food is at fault. Drugging increases constipation, interferes with digestion, sets up irritation and may lead to fatal consequences."

†*Nature's Way*, Reddie Mallett, p. 18.

unless he marries his daughter before she completes her ninth year, he will have to turn her out of his house and send her into the forest alone, with empty hands, and that thenceforth he must not notice her in any way, and no Hindu must give her food or protection from the wild beasts. He said, of course, that no such occasion would arise. I do not know to what sub-caste this gentleman belonged, but I do know of very many cases in which marriage has been later than this, and I have heard of no girls being turned out in this way.

I rather think that some of these people were trying to please Miss Mayo in their Oriental way, not by stating untruths, but by trying to satisfy her mind. I remember once discussing the height of a certain hall in a Raja's palace with a gentleman to whom I had been introduced, who was also one of the officials of the Court. I asked him what height he thought it to be. He said about thirty feet. I looked at it, and said, "Well, I should have thought it to be about forty." Quickly he added, "Yes, of course, you are right; it is forty feet high." I realized that if I had said it was a hundred feet, he would have agreed with me, because of his code of

politeness. I remember that somewhere in Indian History there is a story of a very polite Emperor. One day someone pointed out to him an error in a book he had written. He thanked his well-meaning informant and made a circle round the offending word. After the other man had gone he rubbed the mark out again, for there was really no error. A story is also told of King Edward VII, that on a certain occasion he ate with his knife, so as not to embarrass some people who were committing that egregious solecism! Miss Mayo's informant could no doubt find somewhere in the *Puranas* threats of the kind she mentions; he probably brought these forth for Miss Mayo's delectation, knowing the sort of thing that she wanted.

Her second case is that of a prosperous old Hindu landowner who told her that he had had twelve children, of whom ten died, " because they were girls." She next cites a similar instance mentioned by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, concerning the family of a Maharaja.

Miss Mayo then tells us that statistical proof of her assertions as to female infanticide are practically unobtainable. Of course, as it is against the law, it would have to be pursued in secret, if at all. But I respectfully submit

that there are certain figures from which we may draw conclusions with respect to the prevalence or rarity of female infanticide in India.

The Census of India of 1921* showed that out of every thousand of the Indian population 114 men and women in almost equal numbers were over fifty years old. I would lay stress here on the equality. Does this indicate that girl babies are being destroyed in great numbers? Everywhere in India we find a reasonable proportion of women. Assuming that males and females are born in almost equal numbers, this does not give us reason to believe that in a family, ten out of twelve die because they are girls, or even, indeed, that out of two children, one dies because it is a girl.

I have known a very large number of Hindu gentlemen, and I do not think that any of them could be guilty of this crime. I have noticed that there are plenty of girl-children as well as boy-children in their homes and I have noticed, too, that the parents are just as fond of the little girls as of the little boys.

I have no doubt that there is more rejoicing over the birth of a son in India than over the birth of a daughter. I fancy that this is the case in many countries. There are many

*Vol. 1, p. 128.

reasons for this, as most of my readers know well enough. I have explained that in India it is the boy who becomes the bread-winner. He will support his parents later on. This beautiful custom makes old age a peaceful period in that country, and also enables old people to travel, to go on pilgrimages, etc. The son is, therefore, a very important member of the family. But in due course the son will want a wife, so the girls cannot be dispensed with entirely.

Miss Mayo quotes a statement of the Superintendent of the United Provinces Census, who says he doubts whether there is any active dislike of girl babies. But he speaks of passive neglect. He quotes a proverb: "The parents look after the son, and God looks after the daughter," and adds by way of explanation: "The daughter is less warmly clad; she receives less attention when ill, and less and worse food when well. This is not due to cruelty, or even to indifference; it is simply due to the fact that the son is preferred to the daughter, and all the care, attention and dainties are lavished on him, whilst the daughter must be contented with the remnants of all three."*

Many millions of families in India are on

**Mother India*, p. 71.

the verge of starvation; it would not be surprising if in some of them the sons were to receive first consideration as the future bread-winners of the family. But that there is no deliberate starving of the girls is shown by the figures which I have before me relating to the deaths per thousand of boys and girls within the first year of life, which are as follows:

YEAR	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915
BOYS	214	216	192	218	208
GIRLS	196	198	196	204	195

YEAR	1916	1917	1919	1920
BOYS	209	211	228	201
GIRLS	194	198	220	188

I have omitted the year 1918 because that was the year of the great influenza epidemic, in which the normal course of things was very much disturbed. This mortality is very high, but that is not what we are thinking of at the moment. The point here is that the proportion of girls per thousand to die in the first year of life is less than the proportion of boys. This does not argue that they are badly cared for or that the parents are anxious that they should die of starvation or anything else during that first year. Nor can one think that the parents take such care of the girl children

during the first year in order to kill them off between the first and fifth years. Even allowing for the fact that baby boys are almost everywhere more difficult to rear than baby girls, the above figures do not point to much overlying or other such methods of infanticide of girls acknowledged to be born alive.*

As an illustration of " this attitude towards the unwanted ", Miss Mayo relates the following case. A little girl had fallen down a well and sustained a bad cut on the head. The mother had rushed to the hospital with the child in her arms. In a day or two tetanus developed, and the mother, full of grief and fear, remained praying at the bedside of her little girl, who was at death's door. The father turned out to be rather a villain. He insisted that the mother should go back to him and leave the child to the care of the hospital authorities, and turned a deaf ear to her pleadings for permission to remain. He was a brute

* Some of the deaths of babies are unquestionably due to bad housing conditions. We find that over 800 out of every 1,000 infants born in the factory workers' slums in Bombay die within one year. It is illuminating that when there was a strike and the mills shut their doors there was great danger to health in the locality, because the houses had not sufficient provision for answering the calls of nature, the workers having been in the habit of using the privys provided by the mills.

of a man, who responded to her supplications merely with hard words and a thrust of his foot.*

Such cases occur, I suppose, although during my own thirteen years in India I have never seen or heard of anything of the kind. My experience has been more in line with that of Mr. C. F. Andrews who, speaking of Indian home life from his own long and intimate experience, said: "Nothing is more beautiful to witness than the love of Indian fathers for their children and their homes; and this continually wins a true appreciation from those who are only too ready to criticize the Indian community otherwise. I have lived in such Indian homes, and know the pure joy of it."

**Mother India*, p. 74.

CHAPTER VI

WIDOWHOOD

Much insight and much education,
Self-control and a well-trained mind,
Pleasant words that are well spoken;
  This is the greatest blessing.

Buddha

"MOTHER INDIA" has a chapter dealing with widows and the question of widow re-marriage. Within the first two lines, Miss Mayo describes the fate of the widow as hideous and the widow herself as accursed. The chapter is full of words like this, but there are no descriptions of the widow's life, except some fragments, mostly incorrect.

As the custom is at present, a girl becomes a widow if her husband dies, even if she has gone through only the first ceremony, that of gift marriage, and has remained in her father's house. The figures for the Madras Presidency alone show that there are 23,000 widows below the age of 15. Most of these, of course, have

never been wives in the full sense of the term, but they are not usually allowed to marry again. No friend of India would try to minimize the cruelty, folly and damage to a nation due to the custom of not allowing these and other widows to remarry.

Miss Mayo emphasizes the belief that this unhappy fate is due to the enormity of the girl's sins in a former incarnation, and the idea that she must now expiate those sins in shame and suffering and self-immolation. This fate being ascribed to *karma*, I must add that it would generally imply her sins as a man in a former birth, that some unkindness done to women in the past must now be suffered by herself in similar case.

The following is Miss Mayo's one piece of description:

> The widow becomes the menial of every other person in the house of her late husband. All the hardest and ugliest tasks are hers, no comforts, no ease. She may take but one meal a day and that of the meanest. She must perform strict fasts. Her hair must be shaven off. She must take care to absent herself from any scene of ceremony or rejoicing, from a marriage, from a religious celebration, from the sight of an expectant mother or of any person

whom the curse of her glance might harm. Those who speak to her may speak in terms of contempt and reproach ; and she herself is the priestess of her own misery, for its due continuance is her one remaining merit.*

Let us put beside this a description given by Dr. Annie Besant, who has had thirty-seven years of most intimate contact with the Hindus, and who never hesitates to speak out against the social evils of India. Speaking against child-marriage and for the remarriage of widows, she said :

> You know what widowhood means. I do not exaggerate it as it is often exaggerated, in order to injure Hinduism, by those who know nothing of a Hindu home. I know many a home of my friends where a child-widow is to be found. She is not a drudge ; she is not a slave ; she is not miserable ; she knows not her fate. The people around are kind ; they are tender ; they are loving ; but if there is any festival, the child widow must go into an inner room, and she must not with her presence bring ill-luck to the festival. Is there a marriage in the house, a thing that all the women enjoy so much ? She must be sent away, that her ill-omened eyes may not fall on the bride ; for she

**Mother India*, p. 82.

has been a bride, and she is now a little widow.

Oh! Think of these little ones, my brothers, some of them, perchance, your own children; think of the life which is before them; think of the loneliness of the woman who never knows the touch of a child, who never hears the baby lips syllable the word "mother", shut out from the wifehood and the motherhood which are the ideals of the Indian women, told she should lead an ascetic life, she who knows nothing of the world.*

The widow is not bound to remain in her late husband's family, but she generally prefers to do so. She might return to the house of her father or brothers, or even go to her sisters. Indian social life is very easy-going in all such respects. It is rarely that there is not a general welcome by all near relatives, and where the families are large there is no lack of varied society and entertainment. If the widow chooses not to live in the family of her husband, she has a legal claim upon his estate for maintenance. Miss Mayo says that sometimes one sees widows who are beggars, but that is only as one sees also beggars who are not widows.

* *Wake Up, India*, p. 66.

Miss Mayo emphasizes her dreadful picture by quoting the opinion of an old French traveller in India who more than two hundred and fifty years ago thought that the pains of widowhood were imposed "as an easy mode of keeping wives in subjection, of securing their attention in times of sickness, and of deterring them from administering poison to their husbands."* She seems to have found one solitary Hindu to agree with her in support of this idea, but does not give his name. I suppose he would not like his fellow Hindus to know it.

It is also suggested that the burning of widows upon the husbands' funeral pyres might be common to-day, had it not been for "one of the rare incursions of the British strong hand into the field of native religions." I suppose most of us, when we studied European history at school, were horrified at the way in which people treated one another in the name of religion, and more especially in connection with the terrors of the Holy Inquisition, which was not suppressed in Spain until 1834. The scientifically devilish torture inflicted upon an enormous number of people had not, I believe, its parallel in India.

Mother India, p. 82.

The nearest thing to it was the fanatical self-immolation of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres. This was never, of course, a general thing, but it is estimated that seven hundred cases occurred in Bengal as late as 1817. The practice was called *suttee*, and was given religious sanction by the deliberate alteration of a word in one passage of the Rig Veda (*agre* into *agne*) by unscrupulous priests. It was fortunate that in this matter Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, then Viceroy, took a strong stand in support of the Hindu reformers—Ram Mohun Roy and others—who were fighting this evil, and abolished it in 1829. He was opposed in this reform not only by some Hindus but also by Europeans, who no doubt feared trouble or loss of dignity, like their successors who recently voted against raising the Age of Consent.

The word *suttee* or *sati* means literally only "faithful wife". In an earlier chapter I quoted a passage from Manu to show how the *sati* was she who did not marry again but lived to be a source of happiness and service to others. *Suttee* is spoken of as widow-burning in the *Padma Purâna*. These Purânas are largely old legends served up in a simple and often corrupted way for the ignorant

people. They are not, as Miss Mayo asserts, "the Bible of the Hindus". The charming and instructive Hindi *Râmâyana* of Tulsidas stands more in that position for nearly a hundred million people of northern India. The *Bhagavad Gita* is usually accepted as the greatest ethical and philosophical explanatory work. But behind these stand the *Vedas*, which are generally accepted as the ultimate authority.

Of recent years much progress has been made in the matter of widow remarriage. So far from its having been prohibited in old times, the Vedas contain special words for "a man who has married a widow", "a woman who has taken a second husband", and "a son of a woman by her second husband". Many great men worked for this cause, and many now do so. One of the most successful societies as far back as 1921 caused the remarriage of over 300 widows in the year, and claimed to have on its registers the names of 4,000 men who desired to marry widows.*

According to the Report of the Vidhava Vivaha Sahaik Sabha of Lahore, which has over five hundred centres all over India, during 1925—2,663 widows remarried. When this is

* See *Census of India Report*, 1921. p. 161.

compared with the number for 1915, which was only 15, we see with what impetus the spirit of social reform is moving in India. In his Presidential Address to the Indian Social Conference at Madras in Christmas week, 1927 Mr. K. Natarajan said that if there is not a larger number of widow remarriages it is because the competition for suitable bridegrooms is so severe in the case of unmarried girls as to create an actual market for them. In view of these facts and figures, it is of little use Miss Mayo's quoting the Abbè Dubois, who lived and wrote in India a hundred years ago, to the effect that even if widow remarriage were permitted "the strange preference which Brahmins have for children of very tender years would make such a permission almost nominal in the case of their widows."* Old men do not desire to marry young girls now-a-days. It makes them unpopular, and also brings ridicule upon them.

In connection with this subject there are still two ideas of Miss Mayo's to which I must refer—that the widows must be full of sex cravings and therefore a great source of vice, and that the social climbers from the lower classes may be adopting obsolete customs

*Mother India, p. 85.

faster than the higher classes are giving them up. I can only repeat that while there may be occasional lapses on the part of widows, they are unquestionably in general as pure in life and thought as the spinsters and widows of America and Britain. And as the social reforms have their source and strength very largely among the Brahmans, at the top of the ladder, the social climbers who seek the false dignity of old restrictive customs, such as child-marriage, enforced widowhood and the seclusion of the veil, will soon find themselves in the ridiculous position of the old monkey on a stick of our childhood days, who, approaching his goal at the end of the stick, suddenly found himself upside down.

CHAPTER VII

SECLUSION

Then all the damsels blithe and gay,
At various games began to play.
They tossed the flying ball about
With dance and song and merry shout,
And moved, their scented tresses bound
With wreaths, in mazy motions round.
Some girls as if by love possessed,
Sank to the earth in feigned unrest,
Upstarting quickly to pursue
Their intermitted game anew.
It was a lovely sight to see
Those fair ones, as they played,
While fragrant robes were floating free,
And bracelets clashing in their glee
A pleasant tinkling made.

Râmâyana

"MOTHER INDIA" also contains a chapter on *purdah*, or the seclusion of women. It tells us that this seclusion occurs chiefly among the Muhammadans. The custom was

brought to India by the Muslim conquerors, was adopted by the Hindus, and has been preserved because it carries with it the name and form of social prestige. The book does not give any account of the way in which the women live, and their various activities, enjoyments and sorrows, within the *zenana*, but tells us of a party for veiled ladies at which Miss Mayo was present, held in the house of an Englishwoman. Suddenly there was a disturbance, and men's voices could be heard outside. The frightened Indian ladies ran into the corners, while the English members of the party stood in front to screen them. But after all nothing serious happened. It was only an afternoon call paid by some European friends, who went away as soon as they knew that a "purdah party" was in progress.

The point emphasized is that the women were nervous. One of the youngest of them afterwards said, in response to a question: "You find it difficult to like our *purdah*. But we have known nothing else. We lead a quiet, peaceful, protected life within our own homes. And, with men as they are, we should be miserable, terrified, outside." * This deserves a little analysis. The young lady

**Mother India*, p. 115.

could not have known "men as they are", being in seclusion. Further, her testimony as to the peaceful and protected life within the home would show that the *zenana* is not a place of masculine bullying and terror.

Yet the story is told to support some assertions which precede it. There is a statement that several Hindu ladies wanted to lower the age of membership in a certain club to twelve or even eleven years, so that their daughters could accompany them, "because they were afraid to leave their daughters of that age at home, even for one afternoon, without a mother's eye, and accessible to the men of the family." Miss Mayo adds: "Far down the social scale the same anxiety is found. The Hindu peasant villager's wife will not leave her girl-child at home alone for the space of an hour, being practically sure that, if she does so, the child will be ruined."* The same thing is phrased again and again in different ways: "No typical Mohamedan will trust another man in his *zenana*, simply because he knows that such liberty would be regarded as opportunity." Again: "Intercourse between men and women which is both free and innocent is a thing well nigh in-

**Ibid*, p. 112.

credible to the Indian mind."* As regards this last, I have seen a great deal of it myself, and therefore it is no longer incredible to me.

The error of all this becomes obvious when we remember that in South India the women have always been free from seclusion; they walk about the villages and go to one another's houses and to the wells and temples quite freely, and no man molests them. Men are not different in places where *purdah* obtains from what they are in the places where it does not obtain. Where women have given up seclusion they have not suffered in consequence, although *purdah* is now breaking down at a great rate. For example, at the last Indian National Congress meeting which I attended, there were some two thousand ladies, mostly of the higher classes, sitting there unveiled. Only a small percentage of India's women are now in seclusion (about six per cent), and their liberation is part of India's political progress. In Turkey, with the downfall of the Sultan and the arrival of popular nationalism, the Muslim women have been freed at a stroke from the old *yashmak* or outdoor veil, and from the restrictions of *zenana* life. This will have its

**Ibid*, p. 113.

reaction upon the Muhammadan women in India.

The old teachings and stories of the Hindus present no examples of the seclusion of women. In the *Rig Veda* there is no mention of child marriage, and free courtship of our modern kind is found. Reformers like Mr. Gandhi denounce "vicious customs", not "old teaching" as Miss Mayo would have it. Has Miss Mayo never read the stories of the great women of India's past, how they took part in the discussions of philosophers and in the councils of kings, and how they sometimes even went forth to battle? The Hindu epics, and also later history, are full of accounts of these things.

Let me give an example. Arjuna married secretly but perfectly legally the sister of Krishna, named Subhadrâ, and drove away with her in his chariot. Gatekeepers of the town thought he was stealing her and pursued him. He turned to fight with them and the lady acted as his charioteer. Then

> Sweet-speaking Subhadrâ was highly delighted to see that force of excited elephants, rushing cars and horses, and challenging warriors. She said to Arjuna, in great glee: for long had I in mind to drive thy chariot,

in the midst of the battle, while thou fightest—thou who art possessed of the great soul, and might of limb and the shining aura and *ojas* and *tejas*. I shall be thy charioteer, O Son of Pritha, for I have been well-instructed in the art.*

The story goes on to say that the lady managed the horses with great skill.

In another place Miss Mayo applies her persistent but incorrect idea about the necessity for women's seclusion to the question of women teachers. She makes the assertion that no woman could go out as a teacher and remain pure. To support this she quotes "an Indian gentleman of high position":

> Our attitude toward women does not permit a woman of character and of marriageable age to leave the protection of her family. Those who have ventured to go out to the villages to teach—and they are usually Christians—lead a hard life, until or unless they submit to the incessant importunities of their male superiors; and their whole career, success and comfort are determined by the manner in which they receive such importunities. The same would apply to women nurses. An appeal to departmental chiefs, since those also are now Indians, would,

**The Science of Social Organisation*, p. 205.

as a rule, merely transfer the seat of trouble. The fact is, we Indians do not credit the possibility of free and honest women. To us it is against nature. The two terms cancel each other.*

Whoever said this, it is a concentrated stew of vile and calumnious falsehoods. Even the Ministers of Education are in the pot! Its relation to the political motif is seen again in a similar statement in similar language reported as made by "the head of a large American Mission College," who concludes with the remark: "and yet, these people cry out to be given self-government!"†

These statements are certainly untrue. Though there are no hotels or rooming houses in small Indian towns and villages, it might often be possible for a woman teacher to live with some family interested in the village education, and to have a room of her own in that house. A difficulty arises because such families could not usually bring themselves to take money for hospitality, and yet they could not afford to support an additional person without it. Still, if the matter were in the hands of a village council, they would have no

*Mother India, p. 203.
† Ibid, p. 204.

difficulty in making suitable arrangements, if they proposed to bring a woman teacher to serve in the village school.

At the present time I know personally of a few cases in which young Hindu ladies of high caste have gone far away from their homes to teach in schools, and have lodged with families in houses not far from the schools, or else in the school itself. In these cases, I have every reason to believe that the ladies have kept their virtue, and I have never heard that improper suggestions have been made to them. There is no reason why this should not gradually operate on a larger scale, though it is hardly likely to develop into an extensive system resembling that of the school ma'am in America.

I may mention that in the strongest *purdah* centre in India, the United Provinces, there are 2,720 women teachers. In 1902 there were in India 46 training institutions for women teachers with 1,292 students. In 1912 there were 87 of these schools with 1,538 pupils. In 1922 there were 147 such institutions with 4,458 students. Most of these women teachers are engaged in town schools, for rural education has still to find its funds.

The effect of seclusion upon health is, of

course, bad. It is to be expected that people who live much indoors will develop tuberculosis to a large extent. This is called the white man's scourge. I suppose it is because we live so much in boxes (which we call houses) that it is so prevalent among us. In many of the Indian houses there are enclosed gardens or courts or *patios* in the women's quarters. These provide a measure of open air, but there is still a large section of the ladies, especially those who live in the city houses, many of which run to several stories in height, who cannot have that advantage.

The effect of *purdah* upon bomb-throwing is not quite so obvious, but Miss Mayo says:

> Bengal is the seat of bitterest political unrest —the producer of India's main crop of anarchists, bomb-throwers and assassins. Bengal is also among the most sexually exaggerated regions of India; and medical and police authorities in any country observe the link between that quality and "queer" criminal minds—the exhaustion of normal avenues of excitement creating a thirst and a search in the abnormal for gratification. But Bengal is also the stronghold of strict *purdah*, and one cannot but speculate as to how many explosions of eccentric crime in which the young politicals

> of Bengal have indulged were given the detonating touch by the unspeakable flatness of their *purdah*-deadened home lives, made the more irksome by their own half-digested dose of foreign doctrines.*

We wish that Miss Mayo would tell us just how many bombs were thrown and how many assassinations there have been in the great province of Bengal. There has been even more *purdah* in other parts of the world where Muhammadan peoples exist. Does she find bomb-throwing and anarchy there too?

Ibid, p. 122.

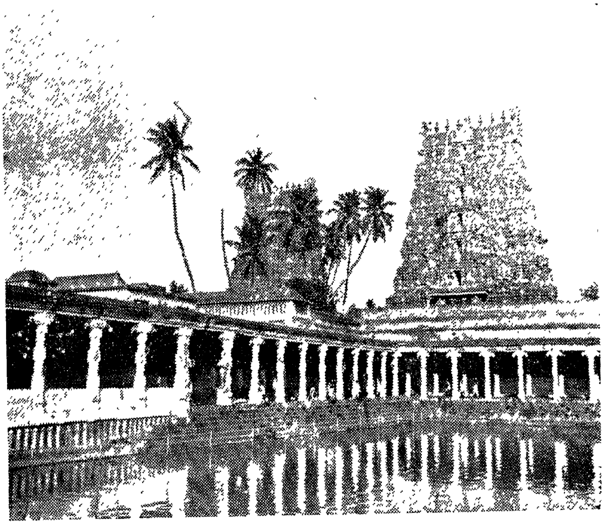
CHAPTER VIII

RELIGION

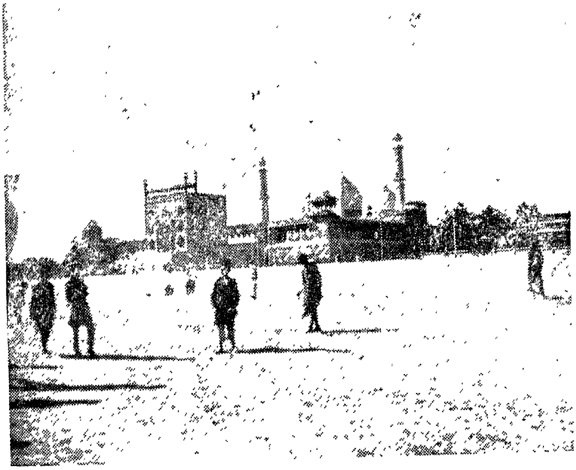
True Religion!—'tis not blindly prating
 what the priest may prate,
But to love, as God hath loved them, all things,
 be they small or great;
And true bliss is when a sane mind doth a
 healthy body fill;
And true knowledge is the knowing what is
 good and what is ill.

Hitopadesa

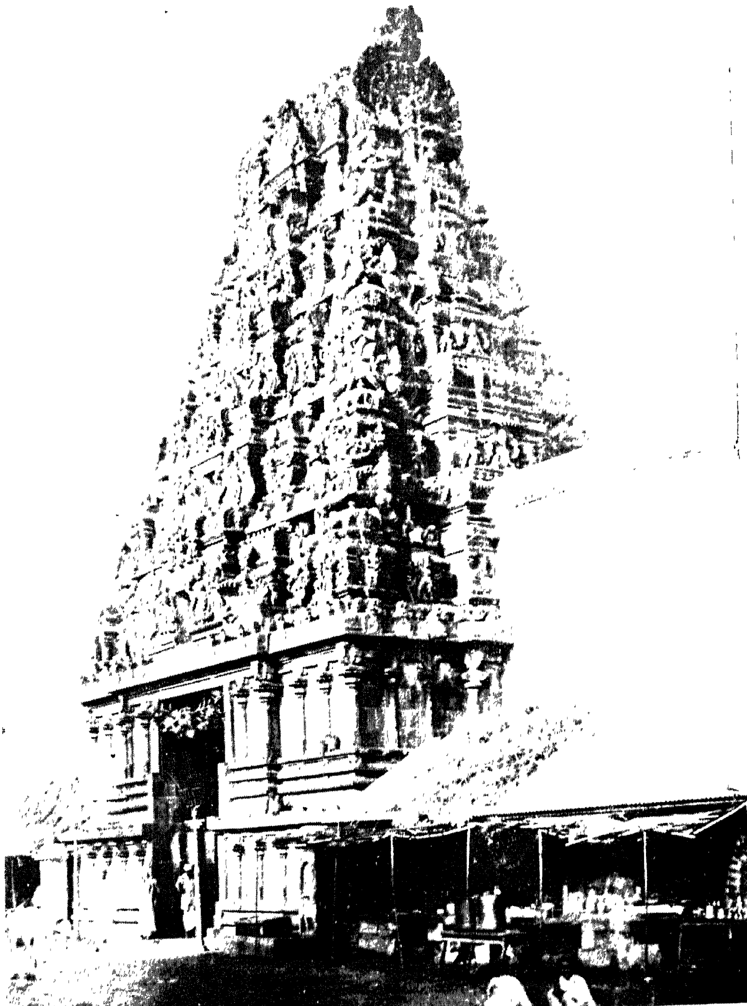
THERE are several criticisms of the Hindu religion which are quite common, but based on mistaken ideas. Let us try to understand. A great range of religious conceptions and practices is included within the term Hinduism, varying from the heights of Vedantic philosophy to the depths of animal sacrifice at Kali Ghat. Miss Mayo took us to the latter place, and insisted that it was representative, so I will discuss that first.



A Temple



A Mosque



A Temple Gateway.

Page 125.

Kali Ghat is a place to which people come from all over India to perform animal sacrifices. Elsewhere they can be carried out only occasionally and with difficulty, because since the time of Buddha, 2,500 years ago, and the development of the more devotional side of Hinduism by the followers of Vishnu, animal sacrifices have become rare in India. Those who still want to perform these old rites regard them as most efficacious when done at Kali Ghat, though to a lesser extent the same rites are performed at Kamakhya in Assam, Devî Patan in northern Oudh, and at some other places on a small scale. In some districts of Kanara there are still buffalo sacrifices once a year, and among various hill tribes there are small sacrificial rites. I have personally come into even indirect touch with these things only twice—one of the buffalo sacrifices above mentioned, after which the carcasses were presented to outcaste people for food, and the other the killing of a cock by some hill people at the commencement of a job of building work. In confirmation of my own experience as to the rarity of animal sacrifice, I may refer to the statement of Mr. J. N. Farquhar, that orthodox Hindus vehemently condemn the practice of killing animals in

sacrifice,* and the remark made by Mr. William Crooke in this same connection that Brâhmans dislike the shedding of blood.†

Miss Mayo finds that from one hundred and fifty to two hundred kids are killed at Kali Ghat everyday. We cannot object to that killing, in the abstract, because in the West we kill tens of thousands where India kills hundreds. But the horror of our Western people arises because at Kali Ghat the Hindus kill with the idea that it is pleasing to God, while we kill only for ourselves, for food, clothing and medicines. We have no objection to the pain, blood and slaughter, for we regard it as a regrettable necessity of our material existence, but we keep it away from our idea of God.

The West has two lives—material and spiritual—kept apart. India has only one. A quarter of a million people in the West go to a base-ball match or a prize fight. If they were Hindus they would see in the bat and the ball symbols of spirit and matter, in Babe Ruth an incarnation of the divine energy, and in the diamond-shaped base the field of space with its four quarters or points of the compass.

**Modern Religious Movements in India*, p. 121.

†*Religion and Folk-Lore of Northern India*, p. 103.

But the Hindus go in their millions to festivals, to bathe in the big rivers or throng the great shrines.

In nature and in human life the Hindus see three processes—creation, preservation and destruction. Then they say to themselves that these are expressions of God in his *Trimurti* or triple form. To the superior or moral man, the God of destruction is pleased when we, following the path of virtue, destroy our own faults and weaknesses, our bondage to matter. To the material or undeveloped man, the God of destruction likes the sense of power involved in the exercise of cruelty, destruction and death. No true Hindu is material; the existence at the present date of animal sacrifices is a concession to the aboriginals of the land. Still, animal sacrifices have been abolished in the territories of some of the Indian Princes.*

Kali Ghat is the worst spot in India, but even that has been painted blacker than it really is. Kali, Miss Mayo tells us, is a Hindu goddess, "wife of the great God Shiva, whose attribute is destruction and whose thirst

*In Travancore State, where there are many worshippers of Shiva, the *Maharani*, or Queen Regent, acting for her minor son, abolished all blood-sacrifices.

is for blood and for death sacrifices."* Omitting the last part, "whose thirst is for blood and for death sacrifices," this definition will satisfy every Hindu who is a follower of Shiva. Shiva is the first member of the Hindu Trimurti or Trinity, which consists of Shiva the Destroyer, Vishnu the Preserver, and Brahmâ the Creator.

All these aspects of Deity are spoken of by their followers as Ishwara, which means the Ruler. The Hindus think of Ishwara as the One God. There may be many subsidiary *devas*, but in the eyes of the Hindus there is but one Supreme God. This was stated long ago in the *Rig Veda* in the following words: "*Ekam Sat viprâ bahudhâ vadanti*," which may be translated: "The Sages name the One Being variously." Another similar saying is: "Priests and poets make into many the bird (*i.e.*, the symbol of sun, the deity) which is but one."†

Some years ago I saw in England a placard bearing in huge characters the legend "Many Gods but no God." Its object was to announce a meeting in which money was to be collected for missions in India. It was a mistake.

**Mother India*, p. 4.

†*Rig Veda*, i.—64 and x—114.

India does not confuse the angels or messengers with the one God. For example, in the Hymn to Agni in the *Rig Veda* the *deva* is addressed: "Thou dost go wisely between these two creations (heaven and earth) like a friendly messenger between two hamlets." The word "angel" means a messenger, so these *devas* are strictly angels.

According to tradition, Vishnu, God as Preserver, sacrificed himself for the world, becoming the life in all forms. But as we forget our divine origin, he also takes a special incarnation periodically in order to re-establish the religion or *dharma* which will guide us along the path of progress.

The image or picture of Shiva with his various symbols reminds us that in dealing with the difficulties, the troubles, the obstructions and even the destructions of life, we are also dealing with God. It has been pointed out that the law of nature is the law of decay or destruction. We build a house and it begins to go to pieces at once. We have to put our thought and life into it in order to keep it in repair. We eat our food and it is gone. But really it is a blessing that we cannot eat our cake and also have it, for the simple reason that we grow in body and mind by the exertions

necessary for procuring our food and shelter. So God is near in these processes of destruction, just as in the processes of growth.

We have had to face difficulties all along the line, but those difficulties have never been too great for mankind, though they have been great enough to ensure our development. There is thus some harmony between the consciousness we have developed and the difficulties which our environment has presented, whether we look at the matter from a material or a spiritual point of view. The thoughtful Hindu looks at it spiritually and embodies our relation to God in that aspect in his conception of Shiva.

Even Kali Ghat can remind us of the value of reverence for God in his destructive aspect. To think that he is playing on the other side of the chess board of life gives us a new attitude, which the courageous soul finds very pleasing. It makes experience valuable. Shiva is also held to be the patron of the *yogîs* and *yoginîs*, men and women who are trying to overcome attachment to material things. He is pictured as treading upon and destroying the demon of material passion. The connection is obvious.

Kâlî is a form of the wife of Shiva. Again we find the breadth of the Indian mind. The

Hindu will not think of God as merely masculine. God's manifesting power is always expressed in feminine terms. The wife of Shiva or of Vishnu or of Brahmâ is his *shakti*, which means his manifesting power. Some of the pictures and sculptures representing Shiva show him as female on one side of the body and male on the other.

The story of Kâlî is briefly as follows. When the wife of Shiva came into the world, she found that her husband, the Lord of the world, was not being treated with the respect due to him. This made her very angry, so she started a wholesale slaughter of his enemies. To put an end to this, Shiva took human form and lay down on the battlefield, where the infuriated Kâlî was destroying everything within reach. She treated him as the rest, but looking down as she trampled upon him, she saw who it was, and the shock put a stop to her misguided activities. She is therefore a symbol of devotion and loyalty, and he of self-sacrifice.

All the Hindu images and pictures are attempts to symbolize a divinity who is conceived of as altogether greater than man. They show that even in common worship the Hindu conception of God is not anthropomor-

phic. If the images have four arms instead of two, or four heads instead of one, that means that the Deity has additional and superhuman powers, and the objects which are held in the several hands are taken as symbols of such powers. Uninformed observers sometimes call these things grotesque, not realizing what they mean to the meditative Hindu. No one will understand India until he realizes that most of its people live very largely in a world of thoughts.

The Hindus find no difficulty in sitting for hours thinking over some subject. They do not need to be entertained by outside things as much as do most white people. And when they look at an object they think of all that it means to them, not merely of its external form. Thus, for example, I have often been taken by Hindu friends into their little shrine rooms in their own houses, and in the temples. There you find pictures or statuettes which are sometimes disproportionate. A Western person would not usually call these beautiful, but my friends would go into raptures over their beauty. It was clear to me that what they were speaking about was the beautiful thoughts aroused in their own minds, for which the objects stood as symbols or as reminders.

The subject of *devas* or angels is brought up again, when Miss Mayo speaks of the ignorance of the Hindu wife: " Her stock of knowledge comprising only the ritual of worship of the household idols, the rites of placation of the wrath of deities and evil spirits, and the detailed ceremony of the service of her husband, who is ritualistically her personal god."*

Miss Mayo's statement about the " stock of knowledge" is incorrect. It is very much larger than this. She then casts an unpleasant color over the religious ceremonies which are performed in Hindu households by talking about "idols" and "the placation of angry deities and evil spirits." Surely the very term "idols" is now out of date! We do not speak of people of other religions in these days as "idolators". We know quite well that they do not worship graven images, that the statuettes and pictures which they use are but instruments and materials of worship, representations of invisible beings and intelligences or of great religious ideas. Images and pictures, together with hymns and canticles and incense and religious gestures are used by many of the Hindu worshippers, just as they

******Mother India*, p. 22.**

are by many Christians who reverence the Saints and Angels, and the Mother of Christ as well as the Christ himself. In many places there are great processions every year in which images of the Saints are carried through the decorated streets. In Patna, the Roman Catholics recently had a great procession carrying the Blessed Sacrament through the streets, with elephants and much oriental profusion of ornament. I do not think that this is idolatry; it is quite a practical sort of psychology. The forms, colors and sounds and odours connected with religious ceremonies all play their part in stimulating the people's feelings, and they may have "magnetic" effects as well. Even kneeling to pray might be classed as a heathenish practice, if we are to judge all these things in some abstract way, without taking human nature into account at all.

In another place Miss Mayo speaks of the wife's "duty towards those gods and devils that concern her." * This reference to "devils" is very unfair. The Hindus do sometimes mention *pishachas* or *bhutas*, and allude to them somewhat in the spirit of "the goblins will get you if you don't watch out!"

* *Ibid.*, p. 72.

But they do not believe in a devil going about doing bad. I could mention twenty great and beneficent deities or angels whose names are practically familiar to Hindu girls, but I cannot think of one name of an evil being that they know. They do use little charms and mascots and amulets. But even those people who believe in Kali do not regard her as malignant but as a benefactress; they have a crude idea that killing a goat to Kali may result in some benefit, but they are not in the least afraid that Kali will go out of her way to do them any harm at any time.

The Hindu believes in the invisible world. He regards our powers of sense as touching only a small section of the great world in which we live. He considers that besides the men, animals and plants, which we see, there are superphysical beings of many grades whom we do not see. The vast bulk of these are thought of as *devas* or angels.

According to general Hindu belief the *devas* or angels are not entirely separate from our world, but the operations of nature are very largely the expression of their thoughts and feelings. The idea is that we are taking the life of the plant for our sustenance, and must not do that unless we are willing to

dedicate the strength that we so obtain in some way for God's purposes. Our good thoughts thus given are considered to be in some way pleasing and helpful to the angels or *devas* in their own sphere and in their work of creation. I mention all this because one of the chief ceremonies in a Hindu household has to do with presenting the cooked food before the shrine before it is taken and served in the dining room. It is considered a sin to eat food without thoughts of God, whose life is in the food. Even the Indian soldiers in France sometimes went long without their food, because they would not touch it until it had been properly blessed by being offered before the image of the deity.

Other ceremonies consist of sending good thoughts to the departed ancestors. But all this, whether based on fact or not, is far removed from placation of evil spirits. Even in the worship of Kali, as I have said, there is no idea of propitiation—that she will do harm. The worst that can be said is that there are prayers for material benefits, such as the birth of a son, or a cure, or success in business or examinations. This is found both in the East and in the West. I was at a meeting in New York recently where some hundreds of

persons listened respectfully to an eloquent speaker, a reverend gentleman, who said that he prayed to God to help people in this world. He told us how he had prayed that a certain man might get employment, and said that he had found this and other such prayers materially effectual. He said, "I do not pray to God to make people comfortable in the next world, but in this." There is a big movement on these lines in America, and I think most of the churches of all kinds pray for the health of people, for favorable weather, for success in battle, for prosperity and for other such things.

Miss Mayo was shocked by several sights which she saw at Kali Ghat. There was a madman who frightened a girl-wife. There were some very unpleasant beggars. There was a funeral-pyre, the burning in progress. There were two or three poor women, who also must have been mad, unless the picture is overdrawn, for one of them knelt on all fours to drink blood, while another sopped up some of it with a cloth in order to take it home. Alas, there are still poor superstitious people in this land of great poverty and little education. But I suspect an overdrawn picture, because "half a dozen sick, sore dogs,

horribly misshapen by nameless diseases, stick their hungry muzzles into the lengthening pool of gore."* Those dogs ought to have been well-fed, with the blood of a hundred and fifty kids a day.

India does not hide her feeble-minded and mad people, and they tend to gravitate to places of pilgrimage and shrines. Many of the beggars seen there belong to this class of unfortunates. Also a percentage of "holy men" are really madmen. In the lunatic asylums of England there is an immense proportion of inmates who are religiously mad. One is likely to meet some of their kind in India about any of the big shrines, or in such public places as Kali Ghat or the bathing steps at Benares.

Ibid, p. 6.

CHAPTER IX

FATE AND ILLUSION

Nay! and faint not, idly sighing, "Destiny is mightiest";
Sesamum holds oil in plenty, but it yieldeth none unpressed.
Ah! it is the coward's babble, "Fortune taketh, Fortune gave";
Fortune! rate her like a master, and she serves thee like a slave.

Hitopadesa

ONE of Miss Mayo's most pronounced criticisms of the Hindu faith, considered as being the cause of much material lack of progress, speaks of "the devitalizing character of the Hindu religion, with its teaching of the nothingness of things as they seem, with the infinitude of lives—dreams all—to follow this present seeming."

Though she touches but briefly on this subject, I cannot let it pass, as it leaves in the minds of readers a permanent wrong impres-

sion. I know that people have said that the Christian religion has an unpractical effect because it tells its people that their happiness is to be found in another world beyond this, and thus makes this world of relatively small importance. I have heard people say to those who are poor: "Well, never mind; it is only for a few years; be good and after you are dead you can enjoy unlimited riches in heaven." Such a mistaken attitude destroys efforts, and prevents experience.

The Hindu religion is not open to this interpretation, for it tells people that they must live again and again in this world. It is taught that there may be an interval between this life and the next birth, in which it is possible to have great happiness, but that is a limited period, and when it is over every man must return to earth and meet the results of his deeds in a former body, which will be good, bad or mixed according to his present actions. He knows that he cannot escape these results, and must learn the lessons of experience. The verse at the head of this chapter, taken from the popular *Hitopadesa*, indicates that this doctrine is far from fatalistic.

This is practical religion, far removed from

dreams. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, which is the most widely used book of Hindu morals, the pupil is told to spend his life working for the benefit of mankind.* By this means, says the Teacher, the great sages of old reached perfection, and theirs is the path that must be followed by all. In the course of the lesson the pupil asks what happens to the man who, though trying to do good or to understand the spiritual things of life, nevertheless fails. He enquires especially about the aspirant who has difficulty in controlling his mind and feelings. He wants to know whether he is "destroyed like a rent cloud, being unsteadfast and deluded." The answer is that "neither in this world nor in the life to come is there destruction for him; never doth any who worketh righteousness tread the path of woe."†

The Teacher adds that he who fell from *yoga* (which means union with the divine) will after a time be reborn in a pure and blessed house, that he will then recover the characteristics belonging to his former body

*Service of mankind is a form of union with the divine, called *karma yoga*. It should, of course, be accompanied by purity of life (though not asceticism), and therefore by control of thoughts and feelings.

†*Bhagavad Gita*, vi, 40.

and with these will again labor for perfection. Thus "laboring with assiduity, purified from sin, fully perfected through manifold births, he reacheth the supreme goal."*

This is not the view only of philosophers and specialists in religion. The average Hindu laborer, if asked why he is in a certain position, or why a certain accident happened to him, will at once say that it must have been due to his actions and thoughts in a former birth. This does not mean that he is sitting down and doing nothing, but that he accepts what he would call his *dharma* or duty in life without complaint, because he considers that it has come about by divine law which governs all our material affairs, and that, as the *Bhagavad Gita* says, by doing his own duty and work a man reaches perfection. He believes in the "Law" which Sir Edwin Arnold described as follows:

> It will not be contemned of anyone;
> Who thwarts it loses, and who serves it gains;
> The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,
> The hidden ill with pains.
>
> It seeth everywhere and marketh all;
> Do right—It recompenseth! Do one wrong—

**Ibid*, vi, 45.

The equal retribution must be made,
Though Dharma tarry long.

It knows not wrath nor pardon ; utter-true
It measures mete, its faultless balance weighs ;
Times are as naught, tomorrow it will judge,
Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself ;
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender ;
The false tongue dooms its lie ; the creeping thief
And spoiler rob, to render.

Such is the law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay ;
The heart of it is love, the end of it
Is peace and consummation sweet. Obey !*

This idea of the value of experience was forcibly brought to my notice by an old gentleman whom I knew very well, by name Nagaratnaswami, otherwise known in the country district where he lived as the Kuruttu Paradeshi, because though he lived in a little cottage on a mound he spent a great deal of

*_The Light of Asia_, Book 8.

his time wandering from one village to another in the district. This old man was penniless and also blind. I stayed with him several times in his primitive cottage, and learned much about his life. One day I happened to say some words of sympathy relating to his blindness and poverty. He laughed at me, and said my sympathy was wasted, for he was a very happy man. He told me that in his long practice of meditation he had acquired the power to remember his past lives, and that he saw there the reason for his blindness and poverty. He said he had been a rich man in Delhi about eight hundred years ago, and had then used his position to hurt some other people whom he disliked. His present difficulties, he said, were the outcome of the injuries done to others in that past life.

"In this life," he said, "I have been dependent on others, and I can never describe the kindness of all these villagers, and how near we have come to one another. If I had gone on being a rich man, I think I should never have got rid of my hard nature, but now I know what it is to love all these people. This is happiness beyond anything that material wealth can give. If I had gone on as a rich man I do not think I could have

voluntarily changed my nature, but the law has taught me. I am therefore very happy about my condition in this life." Right or wrong, this was what I should call a religious outlook far from dreamy and useless.

I know that some say that such ideas involve fatalism, but that is not the way in which I have found that most of the Hindu people take it. They have very pronounced ideas about duty and merit as related to their condition in life. Their view is really the reverse of fatalism, because, first of all, it excludes chance and affirms that what happens to men comes not by mere accident, but because of their own actions, and secondly it puts their future into their own hands. Incidentally, it opens the door of hope for everybody. No matter what may be a man's position in this life, he can work towards whatever talent or condition he wants to have in his future lives.

Looking at this belief as it affects mankind in general, we find that it carries with it a sense that God's justice is done in this world as well as in whatever other worlds there be. Thus, for example, if one man is born with the capacities and opportunities of a Francis Bacon or a Thomas Edison, while another is a

pygmy in an African jungle, it is not that the former has been favored and the latter unjustly treated, but the difference is one of growth. It has taken many lives to bring the genius to his present perfection; the primitive man is merely a soul which has started later on the same path of progress, and after many births he too will be a great man in some line of his own choosing.

It is interesting that Mr. Henry Ford has expressed himself as having a similar idea. He said to an interviewer of *The Literary Digest* recently, "I never made a mistake in my life, nor did you ever make a mistake, nor anybody else." Asked to explain, he said that he believed in reincarnation, that every living person is here to obtain experience, that that is all we ever get out of life, and that a mistake is due to lack of experience and it gives us the new experience which fills the gap. So to Mr. Henry Ford wealth as an acquisition, and profits as such, have no meaning, for it is only what we learn that counts, and as a mistake brings us to the experience we need, that proves it to have been no mistake. All this is also old Hindu thought, expressed by one of the most practical of modern men.

In another place Miss Mayo interprets

Hinduism as fatalism, in connection with the misfortunes of widowhood. She seems to assume that the widow is to be regarded almost as the slayer of her husband in this life. Because she committed some sin in a former incarnation, therefore she is a widow now, instead of a happy married woman. The sin was hers and the consequence hers. Equally the man has died young because of his own sins. The whole theory is that "as a man sows so shall he also reap" and as a man now reaps so has he formerly sown. You must suffer for your own sins. You cannot suffer for anybody else's sins, and nobody else can suffer for your sins. And you cannot suffer by chance, but only as the result of sins.

In many ways this is a very satisfactory proposition. I have read that when the most learned of Church Fathers, Origen, was defending the Christian faith in the early days among the pagan writers, he maintained that Christians believed in the pre-existence of the human soul, because otherwise they would have to admit that their God was unjust. The question was as to whether God, being responsible ultimately for the creation of human souls, was not unjust in creating one which was criminally predisposed or practically

an idiot and another a great saint or a genius, and also in putting them into such different bodily conditions. Origen's reply to this was that they assumed nothing of the kind, because people came to birth in the bodies and under the conditions which they deserved on account of their actions in a previous state of existence.

Here and there Miss Mayo also alludes to the theory of *mâyâ* or " illusion " to show that the Hindus are impractical and dreamy. I think, therefore, we owe it to them to consider this idea also, at least briefly.

The meaning of *mâyâ* is really simple enough ; it is that we do not see the reality of the world exactly as it is, but create a false world in our imagination. Each man makes his own world, and things take color in the world according to the way in which he regards them. Thus, for example, many people would say that blindness and poverty are great troubles. My old friend would tell them that in so thinking they are under an illusion, they are deluding themselves. The Stoics used to say that we are much more affected by our opinions about things than by the things themselves. It is the limited and therefore imperfect point of view that produces illusion.

Think of the many different things that what we call a tree is. To the traveller in India it is a sort of umbrella; to the birds, a home; to the monkeys, a gymnasium; to the worms, a kind of larder. Each one makes his own world in this way.

The philosopher or the *yôgî* tries to overcome his personal bias and see things as they are. Then he finds out that we are not exactly in touch with a world which is full of things having a character of their own that we can define with certainty, but that we are living in the fulness of things. Each one of us is, in a sense, alone with God, who is teaching us, like very young children in a school, through all these stories which we regard as experience. But the lessons are all experimental, that it is say, all the objects we deal with are the working out of our limited point of view, for all forms in common experience are man-made or animal-made or plant-made or mineral-made.

Briefly, the world is not merely the material thing that people think. Human consciousness is far from mature; the mind of the man nearing perfection has its perceptions of deeper reality in connection with these material things.* Our noblest experiences in

*See Tagore on *Personality*, also my *Intuition of the Will.*

consciousness, glimpses of beauty, freedom, love, unity and the like, are little windows into the divine world which some day we shall all enter when we have grown beyond the limitations of our present mind. "As men walk over a gold mine, without knowing that the gold is there, so do all men walk always in the world of God" says an old Hindu book. When men reach that realization and rise into the higher consciousness beyond the human mind there will be no necessity for further births; the gestation period will be over and the man will have come to spiritual birth, having overcome *mâyâ*.

It is those who think that "spades are spades" who are often living in a dream. They are like people who are familiar with the forms of letters but cannot read words and sentences. I once met a man who told me that he could read Sanskrit. It turned out that what he meant was that he could read the letters and make the sounds of the words quite correctly, but he did not know the meanings of the words and had no ideas attached to them. To take things as the realities without looking for the meaning of life is to live in a world of illusion. What has Miss Mayo's "hard-headed American" to say about this? Are his thoughts so

remote from those of Emerson, when he said in his essay on History that "The world exists for the education of each man," and "Through the bruteness and toughness of matter a subtle spirit bends all things to its own will. The adamant streams into soft but precise form before it, and whilst I look at it its outline and texture are changed again. Nothing is so fleeting as form."

CHAPTER X

INDECENCY AND VICE

Enter the Path! There is no grief like Hate!
No pains like passion, no deceit like sense!
Enter the Path! Far hath he gone whose foot
Treads down one fond offence.

Enter the Path! There spring the healing streams
Quenching all thirst! There bloom th' immortal flowers,
Carpeting all the way with joy! There throng
Swiftest and sweetest hours.

Buddha

MISS Mayo says that there is much in the Hindu religion to suggest indecency and vice. Once more I would beg the reader, and Miss Mayo herself, to try to understand. She writes:

> Siva, one of the greatest of the Hindu deities, is represented, on highroad shrines, in the

temples, on the little altar of the home, or in personal amulets, by the image of the male generative organ, in which shape he receives the daily sacrifices of the devout. The followers of Vishnu, multitudinous in the south, from their childhood wear painted upon their foreheads the sign of the function of generation. And although it is accepted that the ancient inventors of these and kindred emblems intended them as aids to the climbing of spiritual heights, practice and extremely detailed narratives of the intimacies of the gods, preserved in the hymns of the fireside, give them literal meaning and suggestive power, as well as religious sanction in the common mind.*

Miss Mayo's footnote to this charming exposition indicates that she did not obtain this knowledge about the symbols of the followers of Shiva and Vishnu direct while herself in India, but derived it from a book written by the Abbé Dubois, a Jesuit missionary, over a hundred years ago.†

Mr. Gandhi, in his article *A Drain Inspector's Report*, published in *Young India*,

**Mother India*, p. 23.

† *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, Abbe J. A. Dubois.

September 15, 1927, writes in regard to these symbols:

> I am a born Vaishnavite. I have perfect recollection of my visits to Vaishnava temples. Mine were orthodox people. I used to have the mark myself as a child, but neither I nor anyone else in our family ever knew that this harmless and rather elegant-looking mark had any obscene significance at all.
>
> I asked a party of Vaishnavites in Madras where this article is being written. They knew nothing about the alleged obscene significance. I do not therefore suggest that it never had any such significance. But I do suggest that millions are unaware of the obscenity alleged to be behind it.
>
> It has remained for our Western visitors to acquaint us with the obscenity of many practices which we have hitherto innocently indulged in. It was in a missionary book that I first learned that Sivalingam had any obscene significance at all, and even now when I see a Sivalingam neither the shape nor the association in which I see it suggests any obscenity.
>
> It was again in a missionary book that I learnt that the temples in Orissa were disfigured with obscene statues. When I went to Puri it was not without an effort that I was able to see

those things. But I do know that the thousands who flock to the temple know nothing about the obscenity surrounding these figures. The people are unprepared and the figures do not obtrude themselves upon your gaze.

The same sentiments are expressed by a well-known public man of south India, Mr. S. Satyamurti, in an article appearing in *The Hindu* of Sept. 17, 1927. Mr. Mukerji, on page 79 of *A Son of Mother India Answers*, bears the same testimony. Personally I can say that I have moved very much among people connected with Indian temples, and I know them to be innocent of these suggestive thoughts which Miss Mayo attributes to them.

I do not believe that there are any "hymns of the fireside" which associate an obscene significance with the symbols of Shiva and Vishnu. I know that there are references to the organs of generation and to the delights of cohabitation in the vast volumes of the Hindu religious literature, because in a fairly extensive reading I have come across them in a few places. But as I have said before, the Hindus do not regard these organs and actions as in themselves indecent. In the literature there are places where people are reminded that our function of generation is essentially

a holy thing, because it is a reflection at a lower level and on a smaller scale of the creative power of the Deity himself. Regarding it so, people are reminded that they must exercise the function only in a natural way and for natural purposes, not at improper times and for the mere sake of sensual and selfish enjoyment. An indecent or prurient mind can of course easily read its own obscenity into such things.

Swami Vivekananda spoke of criticisms such as the present in his patient Indian way as follows:

> The phallus symbol is certainly a sexual symbol, but gradually that aspect of it has been forgotten, and it stands now as a symbol of the Creator. Those nations which have this as their symbol never think of it as the phallus; it is just a symbol, and there it ends. But a man from another race or creed sees in it nothing but the phallus, and begins to condemn it; yet at the same time he may be doing something which to the so-called phallic worshippers appears most horrible.
>
> Let me take two points for illustration, the phallus symbol and the sacrament of the Christians. To the Christians the phallus is horrible, and to the Hindus the Christian

sacrament is horrible. They say that the Christian sacrament, the killing of a man and the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood to get the good qualities of that man is cannibalism. This is what some of the savage tribes do; if a man is brave, they kill him and eat his heart, because they think that it will give them the qualities of courage and bravery possessed by that man. Even such a devout Christian as Sir John Lubbock admits this, and says that the origin of this Christian symbol is in this savage idea. The Christians, of course, do not admit this view of its origin; and what it may imply never comes to their mind. It stands for a holy thing, and that is all they want to know.*

We have seen above Mr. Gandhi's reference to the sculptures and paintings which Miss Mayo or the Abbé Dubois has found on temple walls and other places, expressing sexual things. From long experience I can certify that Mr. Gandhi is correct. I remember well how the existence of some of these small details was brought to my own attention for the first time, after I had been a few years in India. I was sitting with a very venerable old English gentleman who had long resided

Young India, Nov. 10, 1927.

in the country, when another European friend came in. The newcomer was a little excited.

He said, "You know those old temple pillars which we got from some ruins and put up as gateways to our garden some twenty-five years ago? I have noticed to-day that on one of them there are sculptured some figures depicting sexual action. Don't you think we ought to remove them?"

"Do you think anyone has ever noticed them before? Has anyone ever said anything about them?" asked my old friend, with an understanding twinkle in his eye.

"No," said the younger man, "I have only just noticed them myself."

"Then I think we had better say nothing about the matter, and leave well alone."

That happened about fifteen years ago. The pillars are still there, and I don't think anybody else, white or brown, has yet noticed the figures. I shall not say where they are. I have no doubt that the original sculptor meant well and intended to compare religious devotion with the greatest physical pleasure known, with no thought of an obscene or improper use of the function.

Miss Mayo makes much of the fact that in framing the Indian penal code and code of

criminal procedure with respect to obscene exhibits of any kind, the Indian Legislature made an exception with regard to images and other things connected with religion. It was necessary, because the religious people of India do not belong to the class of those City Fathers of a New England town who a generation or more ago insisted upon draping the public statues. If I remember correctly, the female statues had to be draped so that the ankles would not show!

I will now take one by one the worst of Miss Mayo's declarations as to the vicious character of Indians. Some of these are so unexpected that the Hindu gentlemen who have read them are rendered almost speechless with astonishment.

There is a statement that physically attractive boys are commonly drafted to the temples for purposes of sodomy, and that this is rather pleasing and flattering to the parents. Mr. Satyamurti is so stunned that he can only reply: "I have never heard of such a practice." This he writes in a Hindu paper in India; no doubt the practice will be as unfamiliar to his readers as to himself.*

On this subject, Mr. D. G. Mukerji points

*_The Hindu_, Sept. 17, 1927.

out that in India the laws against this particular practice are as severe as elsewhere, and that Miss Mayo has not shown a single record of police court trials which might give us an inkling of its wide-spread prevalence. He adds that his own personal experiences were the reverse of Miss Mayo's. He and all his boyhood friends were taught *Brahmacharya*, purity of mind and body. That one must keep his mind, that mirror of God, and that temple of the Deity, his body, pure and perfect is what the average child is taught. In his house there were four boys. Three are still living and are willing to go before a board of inquiry, and can say on oath that they and their friends never heard of the practices mentioned in *Mother India** as a common thing.

Personally I can only say that I have never heard even the mention of any such thing among priests, parents or boys whom I have known. I have known many families in which there were several boys, but in all cases all the boys were following the ordinary course of life.

Miss Mayo's next statement, also occupying but a few lines (but making up in quality for its lack of explanatory quantity), is that

***A Son of Mother India Answers*, D. G. Mukerji, p. 40.

the mother herself teaches self-abuse to both boys and girls, and that the "highest medical authority" attests that "practically every child brought under observation, for whatever reason, bears on its body the signs of this habit."

On this point let me quote Mr. Mukerji again:

> The above anonymous statement is all the foundation we have for a universal indictment of Hindu mothers, either of high or low caste. No hospital, no name of a doctor of any repute, not even statistics given. I had a mother. My sisters brought up boys and girls. My sister-in-law is a mother. My friends' wives are mothers. But not one of them indulges in such horrible crime and vice. In any court of law, I would be ready to swear that all the Indian mothers that I have known never indulge in such a vile practice. "The highest medical authority," who has not the courage to give his name in print, lied criminally to Miss Mayo when he made such a sinister charge against all the mothers of India. If he be a man, let him come forth with facts and figures. Now that the worst has been said, the facts and figures should be given if any such can be produced.*

*_Ibid_, p. 34.

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* also repudiates the dreadful aspersions of Miss Mayo. He says:

> Let me strongly assure my English and other Western readers, that neither I nor my indignant Indian friends whom I have with me have ever had the least shadow of intimation of what has been described in this book and quoted with a grim of conviction by this writer as the usual practice in the training of sexual extravagance.

Another similar charge appears not even in the text of the book but as a spicy addition to the picture of a Hindu mother and child, evidently of the poorer classes, which faces page 66. This reads: "She feeds it opium when it cries."

The Hon. Mr. N. C. Patel, an ardent worker for reform of the liquor traffic* and an expert in these matters, testified that the amount of opium given in such cases was

*The Commissioner of Excise for the Government of one Province reports that in the year there has been an increase of 90·7 per cent. in the consumption of Indian-made "foreign" spirit, and describes this as "extremely satisfactory"! Imports also increased. Yet in a Legislative Assembly debate in 1925 a solid Indian vote of 69 favoured ultimate prohibition and immediate local option, against European and official Indian opposition amounting to 39 votes.

exceedingly small, about one-tenth of a grain, and that in his opinion it had no evil effect on the death-rate in Gujarat. I should not call this *feeding* the child with opium. The blame for this can hardly be put on Indian shoulders, because it is our own Government which has the monopoly of raising and auctioning opium in India. If we did not do this for commercial purposes the poor ignorant woman could not give it to her child.

Then comes the statement that "little in the popular code suggests self-restraint in any direction, least of all sex relations."* On the contrary there is no nation in the world that talks more about the virtues and that quotes more frequently from old writers with respect to them. Mr. Satyamurti says, in the article which I have already mentioned, that "anyone who knows the a, b, c, of the popular Hindu code will see the palpable falsehood of this statement." The people who have preserved their religion in so many household and other ceremonies have also preserved the beautiful sayings of their saints and sages, and they sing of them and repeat them in their meditations constantly. I suppose Miss Mayo's associates in India did not include any of

*Mother India, p. 27.

those millions of Brâhmans and others who speak in their morning and evening prayers of purity and truth, and she never heard of the theory of *Brahmachârya* (continence), which is so strongly and constantly impressed upon the student. The *Bhagavad Gita*, recited by millions, describes lust, wrath and greed as the triple gate of hell.

Miss Mayo now tells a story about "an eminent Hindu barrister" whose father did not teach him continence, but instructed him how to avoid infection, since as to continence "we know that to be impossible." We are expected to take this as a normal case in a country in which there is no trace of the theory of the young man's "wild oats".

It is bolstered up by a statement made to Miss Mayo herself by "a famous Hindu mystic." He says, "No question of right or wrong can be involved in any aspect of such matters. I forget the act the moment I have finished it. I merely do it not to be unkind to my wife, who is less illumined than I."*

Here is, as a matter of fact, a very good example of Hindu continence, such as literally millions of men do practise in India. It is not only the *yogîs* who think of these matters

Ibid, p. 27.

and follow the precepts of the higher life, but many millions of others, following ordinary vocations, spare a part of their day for *yoga* meditations, and carry out in their lives the moral precepts enjoined in connection with those.* This gentleman did not find it necessary to satisfy his own personal sexual desire, but still he did not entirely selfishly abstain when his wife felt the need. I count that to his credit. I also consider it a disproof of the previous statement that continence is impossible.

We shall not be surprised, Miss Mayo says, after the cases she has put before us, to learn that "the average male Hindu of thirty years, provided he has means to command his pleasure, is an old man; and that from seven to eight out of every ten such males between the ages of twenty-five and thirty are impotent." She adds, "These figures are not random,"† but that is precisely what they are, because

*The "ten commandments" as I have called them, laid down by Patanjali, whom all students of *yoga* try to follow, are thus given in my *Raja-Yoga; The Occult Training of the Hindus*. They are: "Thou shalt not (*a*) injure, (*b*) lie, (*c*) steal, (*d*) be incontinent, and (*e*) be greedy. Thou shalt be (*a*) clean, (*b*) content, (*c*) self-controlled, (*d*) studious and (*e*) devoted."

†*Mother India*, p. 28.

nothing more is said as to their source, and of course they are ridiculous. I will put along with this her statement which I quoted in the introduction, in which, after asking us to take a girl-mother about twelve years old, she says, "Rear her weakling son in intensive vicious practices that drain his small vitality day by day. Give him no outlet in sports. Give him habits that make him, by the time he is thirty years of age a decrepit and querulous old wreck."*

Personally I do not know this land of wrecks. If it existed it would be a conspicuous and quite unique feature on the earth's surface. On the contrary, I have vivid memories of playing football occasionally with my students at the College in Sind. I was under forty years of age at the time, and during the war had been rated as a "Class A" man physically; nevertheless I found my students too rough and strong for me.

Before that, at the Madanapalle College, I can certify that with the general disapproval of the educational authorities we gave every possible holiday and half-holiday to our students in order that they might play in the fields, which they did with great delight. It

**Mother India*, p. 16.

was predicted that because of this we should have bad results in the examinations, but on the contrary, our college stood very near the top for the entire Presidency. At the Central Hindu College in Benares the Principal had similar experience.

If anything tends to discourage games and sports among the students in India, it is the very heavy curricula of the High Schools and Colleges, the studies for which take up nearly all the students' time. It has been the practice to make the examinations more and more difficult, "to raise the standard." The task of the student may be inferred from the fact that about ten years ago the Madras University rejected 72½ per cent. of the candidates from its own colleges for the Intermediate Examination. As in most cases the very livelihood of the young man would depend upon his passing the examinations, he could not afford to neglect his studies for the sake of exercise, while steps were being taken to produce what Sir Valentine Chirol called a "healthy decrease" in the number of students.

After finishing their studies these young men do not suddenly fall away in health and strength. Although the heat of India and the dust of her ground do not favor the most

vigorous games there are tennis clubs with gravel or cement courts in every market town, however small. The agricultural workers and artizans, the vast bulk of the population, do not need or want these, but they are thronged every evening by the local doctors, lawyers, clerks and other sedentary workers, and generally a hard, fast game is played, often with deadly precision.

In the "Atlantic Monthly"* Mr. Alden Clark writes that every summer he plays in tennis matches against two South Indian princes over fifty years old, who are full of health and energy. In the principal tennis club of his own town of Ahmednagar there is a pair of Brâhmans aged 48 and 55 who can beat any of the British military officers and civilians, and there are many vigorous players over forty. This is a general condition—I have known clubs of this kind, having such members, in many places.

The Census of 1921† gives 114 out of every 1,000 of the people of India as over 50 years old. The figure for America is 141. The Indian figure is not bad, considering the climate and the widespread poverty. The

*Feb. 1928, p. 276.

†Vol. 1, p. 128.

average expectation of life in India is about twenty-five years, in England about forty years, in New Zealand sixty. If we are to argue that the death rate in India is greater than that in England because India is immoral, we can equally argue that the death rate in England is higher than that in New Zealand because the English are immoral. But all such questions must be studied on their merits, not in such a ridiculous way. If the Indian people had been one-tenth as vile as Miss Mayo tries to make out, they would not have been a great country all through these thousands of years, but, as one writer puts it, "they would have smothered in their own putrefaction long ago."

In support of her central contention, Miss Mayo points out that there are some indecent advertisements of medicines in Indian newspapers, and that in three years there were eleven prosecutions in the Punjab for obscenity in connection with these. I think that these advertisements must have been mostly not for the sale of instruments of vice, but for the assistance of people in bad condition. I do not wish to defend indecent advertisements, but I do wish to say that opinions differ as to what is and what is not indecent. Govern-

ment circularized the editors of the Indian newspapers on the subject of these advertisements, but did not explain to them just what was and was not objectionable from their point of view. I cannot see in this connection the reprehensibility which Miss Mayo attaches to the desire of *Brahman Samachar* that the Editor should be informed exactly as to which advertisements were objectionable and which were not.*

I can certify that India is not full of drug stores, chemists' shops or suppliers of "surgical apparatus". There is scarcely a dentist. On the other hand, in an English bath-room I once counted seventy-four medicine bottles, apparently all in use, in the house of a family which considered itself healthy. There are few or none of these in a Hindu house in the country.

I must now give a big quotation from Miss Mayo, because it is the worst bit she has to offer. She has presented it with considerable dramatic skill, and she has taken all the trouble to go back one hundred years to procure her information about a case of the kind she wants, which she derives from the book of the Abbé Dubois before mentioned :

*Mother India, p. 29.

But a far more characteristic general attitude was that evidenced in the recent action of a Hindu of high position whereby, before giving his daughter in marriage, he demanded from his would-be son-in-law, a British doctor's certificate attesting that he, the would-be son-in-law, was venereally infected.* The explanation is simple; a barren wife casts embarrassment upon her parents; and barren marriages, although commonly laid to the wife, are often due to the husband's inability. The father in this case was merely taking practical precaution. He did not want his daughter, through fault not her own, to be either supplanted or returned upon his hands. And no reproach whatever attaches to the infected condition. No public opinion works on the other side.

In case, however, of the continued failure of the wife—any wife—to give him a child, the Hindu husband has a last recourse; he may send his wife on a pilgrimage to a temple, bearing gifts. And, it is affirmed, some castes habitually save time by doing this on the first

*Mr. S. Satyamurti, a well-known South Indian says of this: "Either the statement is untrue or if true is clearly a case of such a gross aberration that it has no value whatever, and can prove nothing." *The Hindu*, Sept. 17, 1927.

night after the marriage. At the temple by day, the woman must beseech the god for a son, and at night she must sleep within the sacred precincts. Morning come, she has a tale to tell the priest of what befell her under the veil of darkness.

"Give praise, O daughter of honor!" he replies. "It was the God!"

And so she returns to her home.

If a child comes, and it lives, a year later she revisits the temple, carrying with other gifts the hair from her child's head.

Visitors to the temples to-day sometimes notice a tree whose boughs are hung with hundreds of little packets bound in dingy rags; around the roots of that tree lies a thick mat of short black locks of human hair. It is the votive tree of the God. It declares his benefits. To maintain the honor of the shrine, the priests of this attribute are carefully chosen from stout new brethren.

Everyone seemingly understands all about it. The utmost piety, nevertheless, truly imbues the suppliant's mind and contents the family.*

The first part of the above is just another anonymous case which we are expected to regard as common. The story of the temple

**Mother India*, p. 29.

contains ideas absolutely new to me, and apparently to most Hindus for Mr. Satyamurti writes for Indians, in an Indian newspaper: "This custom does not exist anywhere, to my knowledge. But assuming it exists in some remote or obscure part of the country, what is the purpose of Miss Mayo's mentioning it, except to brand the whole nation as a nation of prostitutes?" But Mr. Satyamurti need not assume it, since it comes out of an old book of very doubtful value. It is wicked to suggest to a foreign public that the small votive offerings attached to trees imply dishonor of the mothers who have placed them there.

Another point is suddenly raised now—that the Hindus have become so weak through vice that their minds also have become feeble, or at least fickle, so that the nation develops no real or lasting leaders and "such men as from time to time aspire to that rank are able only for a brief interval to hold the flitting minds of their followers." This is imagination pure and simple, for there are plenty of such men, some of whom have been leaders for a great many years. India has a tremendous record of social and religious reformers, poets and literary men who have had and have an immense following. India is a land of great

constancy, not of fickleness. To this constancy, Miss Mayo objects when it applies to old traditions, but when she wants to find another fault to support her assertions as to the weak-mindedness of the people, she invents the idea of fickleness.

I will conclude this chapter. with Miss Mayo's statement on prostitution in India. She avers:

> In some parts of the country, more particularly in the Presidency of Madras and in Orissa, a custom obtains among the Hindus whereby the parents, to persuade some favor from the gods, may vow their next born child, if it be a girl, to the gods. Or a particularly lovely child for one reason or another held superfluous in her natural surroundings, is presented to the temple. The little creature, accordingly, is delivered to the temple women, her predecessors along the route, for teaching in dancing and singing. Often by the age of five when she is considered most desirable, she becomes the priests' own prostitute.*

As to all this Mr. Satyamurti says: "The caste of Devadasis† exists. They sometimes adopt children. But the idea in this passage,

**Mother India*, p. 47.

†Dancing girls.

that people of other castes give their children to these people and allow them to develop into prostitutes has no basis in fact, and is a figment of the author's imagination."*

I do not see that it is necessary for us to enter at length into this big question of prostitution. It has a form of its own in India, just as it has in Japan, in France or England, or anywhere else. From what I have heard of it, I should judge it to be very much more above board in India than in England or America. I do not believe that it exists on a large scale. The statement about the little girl of five must be fiction. Miss Mayo says it often occurs. She will be doing a kindness to India if she will point out the cases and give the police an opportunity to deal with them. The State of Mysore did not find it difficult twenty years ago to abolish the institution of temple girls. Perhaps British India will shortly follow this example.

**The Hindu*, Sept. 17, 1927.

CHAPTER XI

CHARACTER AND MANNERS

Give thy dog the merest mouthful, and
he crouches at thy feet,
Wags his tail, and fawns, and grovels,
in his eagerness to eat;
Bid the elephant be feeding, and the
best of fodder bring;
Gravely —after much entreaty—
condescends that mighty king.

Hitopadesa

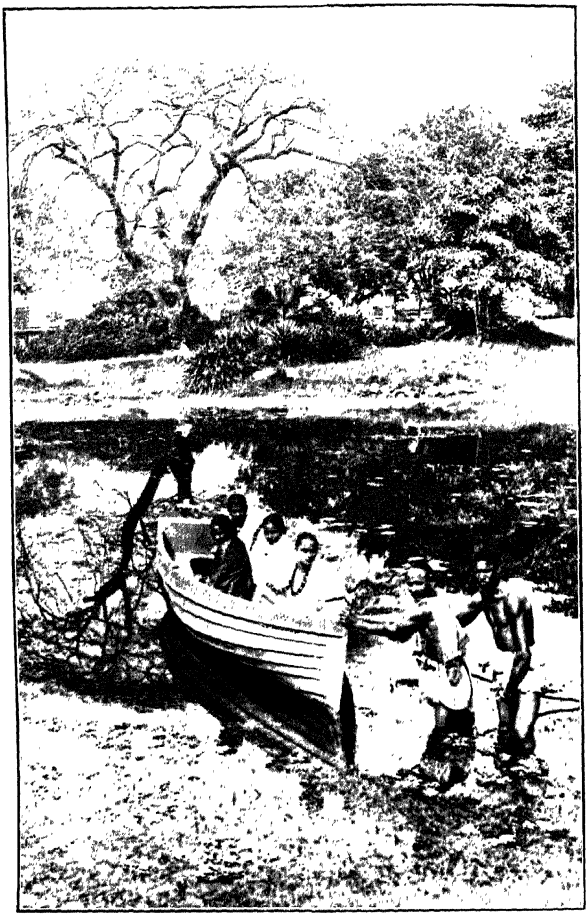
"MOTHER INDIA" takes up the traditional criticism that Indians "waste their time in talk" instead of helping the Government, which goes on slowly but steadily improving the condition of the country.* The Indian point of view is that (1) they have been reduced almost to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water in their own country, (2) the Government though doing great good in several ways is also doing

**Mother India*, p. 20.



Meditation.

Page 176. *Ewing Galloway, N. Y.*



Calm Waters.

Page 177. *Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.*

fundamental harm in various ways, because it has not the single-minded and determined purpose of the welfare of India first and India alone, and (3) therefore some talk or agitation (in the good sense) is necessary. That the descendants of the old Indian upper classes are not willing to remain permanently the devoted servants and assistants of British officers, whom they regard as not understanding the problems or the true welfare of the country, should not be surprising.

Putting aside for the moment the political questions involved in the above attitude, everyone who has had experience of the Indians must acknowledge both their high character and their good work.

I have myself had much to do at different times with district officers and sub-officers. Usually such an officer, who in the south is called a Collector (because he is collector of taxes as well as magistrate and other things), is British, but he is assisted by one or more Deputy Collectors, mostly Indians. These Deputy Collectors I have always looked upon as wonderful men. They seem to know everything even remotely connected with their very complicated work, and generally the Collector finds it necessary to consult them frequently.

The practical executive government is very largely upon their shoulders, assisted by the next lower grade of officers, the *tahsildars*, who in their turn are nearly all men of great ability who do a large amount of varied and responsible work. It is not only in the revenue department that the Indian officers have so distinguished themselves. They have proved themselves equally efficient as judges, doctors, engineers, educationists—indeed in every profession. Lower in the professional scale the same relative ability and willingness always appears.

India has long been clamoring to have more of the higher offices thrown open to her own people in equal competition with the European. But it was only ten years ago that a definite scheme was laid down to increase the number gradually so as to make it possible for these posts ultimately to be occupied by a majority of Indians. Is it not obvious in this case that some talk was necessary before these thoroughly capable men could be permitted to do the more responsible work of their own land? It was the "talkers" who blazed the way for that and other reforms, so I suppose that when Miss Mayo speaks disparagingly of public men, she is not thinking of the many thousands who are giving splendid paid service

to the country, but of those honorary workers who belong to the innumerable societies which have been organized for the social and political uplift of the country. These men are for the most part busily engaged in their professions or trades—their work for the country is supplementary, and must consist mainly of speaking or taking other part in public meetings in which all the questions of the day are ventilated.

These meetings do splendid educational work. I have seen, for example, 15,000 people gathered in a huge *pandal* or tent of the Indian National Congress listening to speeches by which they learn much concerning their country and its social and political advancement. They then carry that knowledge back to their small towns and villages. It is very wrong to say that among these people and those who attend other Conferences there appear "few signs of concern for the masses." In their own towns these men and women are working in hundreds of ways for the welfare of the people. I cannot undertake to enlighten abysmal ignorance even with a list of the active organizations which exist. It would itself make up a book.

Lest my own statement as to the character and ability of Indians should seem too small

and indecisive, let me add a quantity of similar testimony from well-known public men who have spoken or written on the subject. The reader who feels that he does not need this evidence may now skip a few pages. I do not wish to bore anybody with excess of information, but for once I think it is necessary to show how wide-spread is the appreciation of Indians by those who know them best.

Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson made a speech in 1913, at the time of his retirement from the office of Finance Member of the Indian Government, in which he said:

> I wish to pay a tribute to the Indians whom I know best. The Indian officials, high and low, of my department, through the years of my connection with them, have proved themselves to be unsparing of service and absolutely trustworthy. As for their trustworthiness, let me give an instance. Three years ago, when it fell to my lot to impose new taxes, it was imperative that their nature should remain secret until they were officially announced. Everybody in the department had to be entrusted with this secret. Any one of these, from high officials to low-paid compositors of the Government Press, would have become a millionaire by using that secret improperly.

But even under such tremendous temptation no one betrayed his trust.

Sir Lepel Griffin, President of the East India Association, speaking in December 1901, said:

> When I look back on my life in India and the thousands of good friends I have left there among all classes of the native community, when I remember those honorable, industrious, orderly, law-abiding, sober, manly men, I look over England and wonder whether there is anything in Christianity which can give a higher ethical creed than that which is now professed by the large majority of the people of India. I do not see it in London Society; I do not see it in the slums of the East End; I do not see it on the London Stock Exchange. I think the morality of India will compare very favorably with the morality of any country in western Europe.*

Sir Michael Sadler, President of the Calcutta University Commission, speaking in Leeds in 1919, said:

> One cannot walk through the streets of any centre of population in India without meeting face after face which is eloquent of thought, of fine feeling, and of insight into the profounder

The Modern Review, Oct. 1927.

things of life. In a very true sense the people of India are nearer to the spiritual heart of things than we in England are. As for brain power, there is that in India which is comparable to the best in our country.

Judge Sleeman, who lived in India for nearly twenty-five years, said:

> I have before me hundreds of cases in which a man's property, liberty, or life has depended upon his telling a lie, and he has refused to tell it.*

Professor Wilson, the famous Sanskrit scholar, wrote:

> I lived, both from necessity and choice, very much amongst the Hindus, and had opportunities of becoming acquainted with them in a greater variety of situations than those in which they usually come under the observation of Europeans. In the Calcutta mint, for instance, I was in daily personal communication with a numerous body of artificers, mechanics and laborers, and always found amongst them cheerful and unwearied industry, good-humoured compliance with the will of their superiors, and a readiness to make whatever exertions were demanded from them; there was among them no drunkenness, no disorderly conduct,

*R. C. Dutt's *Civilization in Ancient India.*

> no insubordination. It would not be true to say that there was *no* dishonesty, but it was comparatively rare, invariably petty, and much less formidable than, I believe, it is necessary to guard against in other mints in other countries. There was considerable skill and ready docility. So far from there being any servility, there was extreme frankness, and I should say that where there is confidence without fear, frankness is one of the most universal features in the Indian character. Let the people feel sure of the temper and good-will of their superiors, and there is an end of reserve and timidity, without the slightest departure from respect.*

Sir Thomas Munro's opinion nearly a hundred and twenty years ago was:

> If a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill,† a capacity to produce

***India, What Can It Teach Us*? F. Max Muller. p. 40.

†Consider the great electrical works of Mysore State before coming to the conclusion that these characteristics have died away in India during the last two centuries. Sir Alfred Chatterton, writing to the London *Times* recently, said: "I have personally no doubt that, given equal opportunities, the Indian is capable of reaching the same standard of excellence in pure or applied science that he has done in languages, mathematics, history, economics, and philosophy. In the practice of medicine and surgery he has made great strides; in engineering, in an Indian State like Mysore, his achievements in recent years are worthy to rank with those of British engineers in British India."

> whatever can contribute to either convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and above all, a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect, and delicacy, are among the signs which denote a civilized people—then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe, and if civilization is to become an article of trade between England and India, I am convinced that England will gain by the import cargo.*

Mountstuart Elphinstone, former Administrator of the Maharashtra and Governor of Bombay, long ago wrote:

> No set of people among the Hindus are so depraved as the dregs of our own great towns. The villagers are everywhere amiable, affectionate to their families, kind to their neighbors, and towards all but the government honest and sincere. Including the Thugs and Dacoits, the mass of crime is less in India than in England. The Thugs are almost a separate nation, and the Dacoits are desperate ruffians in gangs. The Hindus are mild and gentle people, more merciful to prisoners than any other Asiatics. Their freedom from gross debauchery is the

*_History of India_, Mill, Vol. i, p. 371.

point in which they appear to most advantage; and their superiority in purity of manners is not flattering to our self-esteem.†

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, in his book *Christ of the Indian Road*, writes:

> I find that my love for India has a quality in it now that it did not have in the early days. I went to India through pity; I stay through respect. I love India because she is lovable, I respect her because she is respectable; she has become dear to me because she is endearing...... I had come to India with everything to teach and nothing to learn. I stay to learn as well, and I believe I am a better man for having come into contact with the gentle heart of the East.

Mr. Ratcliffe, formerly editor of *The Statesman* of Calcutta, writes in the *New Republic* of Sept. 21, 1927:

> I lived for five years in India, occupying a position which gave me unusual opportunity of meeting Indians of different kinds. I had many Indian friends. I saw the inside of Indian homes. I observed the laboring Indian in cities and villages. And, as I call up the memory of those peoples and scenes, and set the reality of my recollection alongside the appalling picture which Miss Mayo has provided for

†*History of India*, Mountstuart Elphinstone, pp. 375-81.

> her very large company of readers in several continents, I am filled with bewilderment and regret. The vast multitude of India's common people makes upon every Westerner a wonderful impression of goodness, endurance and dignity.

Innumerable military officers have splendid things to say of the Indians as soldiers. Miss Mayo herself recounts how the Madras Sappers volunteered to row the rifles over to Kut in the face of the Turkish machine-gun fire. "When the boats came back, out of seventy rowers scarcely a man was left unhurt, and many were dead. But those little sapper fellows ashore, they swarmed down, hove their dead out on the bank, jumped into their places, and, as each boat filled with men, shoved off into their comrades' fate."*

Let me quote as to India's part in the great retreat from Mons near the beginning of the war. We see in this that it was Indian troops that first stemmed the German advance upon Paris :

> Her (India's) army, kept on a war footing, was flung across the road to Paris on which the Germans were advancing, forcing back with their huge numbers the splendid but small army of Britain's veterans, who fought every yard of

**Mother India*, p. 171.

the way, but inevitably fell back slowly before the great waves of Germany's overwhelming numbers.

It was at that critical moment that the Indians arrived, and it was no wonder that in both Houses of Parliament the members sprang to their feet, and cheered with hot enthusiasm when the news reached them that the German advance was checked, and that the Kaiser's boast that he would "dine in Paris in a fortnight" had been falsified by the appearance of the Indians.*

General Sir James Willcocks, who commanded the Indian Corps in France for a year, has the following dedication to his book, *With the Indians in France*: "To my brave comrades of all ranks of the Indian Army, I dedicate this book, which is an earnest endeavor to record their loyalty and imperishable valor on the battlefields of France and Belgium." Further on he writes:

> Her sons have shared the glory of the Empire ......those brave men not only filled a big gap in our battered line, but, helped and encouraged by their comrades of the British battalions of the Indian Corps, held it against incessant attack. Minenwerfer, hand grenades, and high

***New India*, Dec. 8, 1927.*

explosives tore through them and flattened out their trenches; blood flowed freely, but as often as they were driven back from their defences they managed to return to them again. India has reason to be proud of her sons.

The number of men who served in the Empire's Navy, Army and Air Force from 1914 to 1918 was 9,291,526. Of these, England alone enlisted 4,006,158; Scotland 557,618; Wales 272,724 and Ireland 142,202. Of the Dominions, Canada enlisted 619,636; Australia 416,800; New Zealand 124,211; South Africa 136,074. The total for the Dominions was thus under 1,300,000. India provided 1,338,620, so that she sent more than all the Dominions added together. This was surely a great contribution to the Empire's future. In addition to all this India also presented nearly £ 100,000,000 as a special gift towards the expenses of the war.

Miss Mayo criticizes the Indians in British India for allowing themselves, who amount to nearly two hundred and fifty millions, to be ruled by the small body of 67,432 Britishers, of whom, by the way, sixty thousand are in the army.

I believe most emphatically that India, which constitutes the vast bulk of the British

Empire in point of numbers, is friendly towards us; but suppose the Indians did wish to drive us into the sea, it would not be easy, for we have machine guns, field guns, armoured cars, tanks, fighting aeroplanes and poison gas, which we would not be slow to use, while they have no weapons at all. One remembers the (unjustifiable) Jallianwalla Bagh incident at Amritsar, where over fifteen hundred defenceless people, including women and children, were shot down, and left on the ground for twenty-four hours with no water or medical aid. I visited the spot shortly afterwards and saw by the bullet marks where the firing had been concentrated upon a low section of the wall while the people were trying to escape at that only available exit.

To go back a little in time, Macaulay describes what happened after the battle of Plassey, which took place in 1757. He wrote of the period that followed: "Thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this......That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with the strength of civilization."

I read the other day that four men held up

a bank in which there were seventy people, in one of the big American cities. They came in brandishing their revolvers and commanding the people to lie down on the floor, which they all obediently did, while the thieves went off with their plunder. I suppose, strictly, we ought to reproach them for not refusing to lie down. To-day appears a report that a young man and a young woman held up two stores in New York with ten-cent water pistols. Such being the case, an unarmed people could hardly stand up against our well-equipped garrisons.

In other ways than by the application of direct force we have also means to keep India in submission. I have often contemplated with admiration the marvellous administrative cunning and skill of the British people, the way in which the government has its finger in one way or another upon landholder, merchant, professional man, and even school-boy. I saw something of this when I first took charge of a High School in the Madras Presidency. Every boy had to have a certificate, in which all his marks were recorded for three years before leaving school or going on to College. This certificate also contained comments on his character and a full set of finger prints for unfailing identification.

That boy or young man was not to go near any political meetings and was to be careful what he said and where he said it, otherwise his career would be ruined. No one of them could become a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer, or obtain a post under government unless he had his certificate complete and satisfactorily marked. Almost every avenue of life, including college education, could be shut off from the student who drew any suspicion upon himself of taking active interest in the political progress of his country.

One example of the way in which Government thus keeps a finger on the teachers and managers of schools as well as the boys is shown in the following circular recently issued by the Punjab Ministry of Education.

> Grants will ordinarily be withdrawn from a school without notice if the manager or any member of the Managing Committee or any of the teachers employed in the school take part in political propaganda or agitation directed against the authority of Government or disseminate opinions tending to excite feelings of disloyalty or disaffection against Government or of enmity and hatred against any section or sections of His Majesty's subjects. Government reserves to itself the right to refuse or withdraw

any grant at its entire discretion, anything in the rules of the code notwithstanding.

The weakness in all such announcements lies in the interpretation or possible interpretation of the words "directed against the authority of Government." Attending meetings called to consider the boycott of the Simon Commission could have been interpreted as within this category, for example.

Miss Mayo makes a point of the untruthfulness of Indians. We are not to believe what any Indian says when he talks in the Councils because, according to her, he will quote falsely and will do everything in his power to deceive in order to gain his end. If this is the case, is it not rather surprising that so many of them spoke "frankly" so many times to Miss Mayo?

She manages to bring together some quaint pieces of conversation to support her curious assertions. One man tells her that if he has deviated from the truth that is preached as above all in the scriptures, it is because of adverse circumstances. Another great mystic seems to have said "What is truth ? Right and wrong are relative terms. You have a certain standard; if things help you, you call them good. It is not a lie to say that which is necessary to produce good. I do not distin-

guish virtues. Everything is good. Nothing is in itself bad. Not acts, but motives count."*

The Hindus have an ancient saying which they often quote: "*Satyam eva jâyate, nânritam*," which means: Truth always conquers, not falsehood." I could quote a hundred times from the writings of many Hindu teachers of ethics to show that truth means truth in thought, word and deed; they are always careful to specify the three things. And that is how the people understand it. I admit that there are a few polite phrases which contain elements of untruth, similar to our "Not at home". Also sometimes Europeans misunderstand Indians on account of their silence. Sometimes an Indian says nothing while you go on talking. Do not imagine that he supports your views, although he says nothing. Sometimes an Indian does not reply to a question. If you understand their custom in this matter, you will not press your question. A most popular quotation is: "Speak the pleasant truth; do not speak the unpleasant truth; do not speak the pleasing untruth." They leave the unpleasing untruth entirely unmentioned.

Miss Mayo says that it is no shame to a

**Mother India*, p. 304.

Hindu to be caught in a lie. "His morality is no more involved in the matter than in a move in a game of chess." There may be some cases of this kind, but on the whole, to "get away with it" does not excuse sharp practice in India. Whatever else a Hindu is, he is not "smart". The sort of accusation that Miss Mayo indulges in here is common enough, and of the same trashy quality all over the world. When in England I was advised by a merchant there to watch the Americans, as they were full of smart practice and their public affairs were seething with dishonesty and graft. I have found it quite safe to ignore that advice. I was told the same thing about the Japanese —not to trust them. But in Japan I found the Japanese very honest. They could have robbed me several times, but did not. Let us try to understand one another.

When we go to another country I think we should adapt ourselves a little, both materially, and mentally, where no principle of right and wrong is involved. This is especially necessary with respect to the smaller manners and customs. Let me explain some of the Hindu views in this connection.

Miss Mayo relates with some indignation how a lady sitting at table with an Indian

prince, borrowed his ring in order to look at it closely, as she admired it, and rather resented his order to his servant to wash it before he returned it to his finger. It is an extreme case, but all the same I think we should permit the prince to have his own fastidiousness in these matters. The hand which had touched bread and butter may have slightly greased the ring. The fact that he told his servant to wash it, and then resumed the conversation, shows that it did not occur to him that she would regard the action as offensive.

The average Brâhman shudders at the western practice of carrying dirt about in a pocket handkerchief. If he is with his own people and he wants to sneeze or spit he usually walks out of the house to do it. Sometimes, if he is with Europeans and cannot easily walk out in that way (because he feels it to be against their customs) he may as unobtrusively as possible blow his nose on a corner of his scarf and afterwards get rid of that.

That same man (and especially woman) shudders at the idea of wearing any cloth or garment on Tuesday which he wore on Monday. He sees Europeans going about with suits of clothes which have not been

cleaned for weeks, months and even years. We are accustomed to this, but his habit of having every cloth absolutely newly clean every day makes him regard our custom of carrying dirt and stale perspiration about as simply horrible. He also disapproves of that form of bathing in which one sits in a tub of water made dirty by oneself, and insists upon a shower-bath, mechanical or hand-poured, for himself.

I dined lately in a good restaurant in New York. The kitchens and dining room were no doubt beautifully clean, but there were several men near by who were smoking, that is to say they were taking smoke into their mouths, saturating it with their saliva, and puffing it out on to the food of the other people there, who had to take it in the air they breathed as well as in their food. A Brâhman could smell a person who had been in such a place for hours afterwards. I am not objecting to that smoking, but I am explaining the Hindu point of view.

The Brâhman usually eats with his fingers, which he washes, together with his teeth and his feet, before and after every meal. He does not like the idea of using spoons which have been in other people's mouths. For the same

reason he usually drinks without touching his lips to the cup (in south India), from a private cup (in north India) or from cheap earthen cups which are broken afterwards (in various places). He would consider a subway crush unhygienic. He also disapproves of kissing, and of men and women dancing in each other's arms. On account of these last items, among other things, there is much anxiety on the part of people connected with the Government about the showing of European and American moving pictures in India, on the ground that they tend to destroy the Indians' respect for the white races and their civilization. They find it difficult to understand some of our ways. As to this I cannot refrain from telling one story from India:

Once upon a time an English gentleman gave an order to an Indian carpenter to do some carved woodwork. "Does the Sahib want Indian designs, symbols of Indian things?" Oh no, he would like to have a design suitable for the English people, and would leave it to the carpenter. Judge his astonishment when the work arrived, and he saw a panel beautifully, if innocently, carved with characteristic European "symbols"—a padlock, a pistol and a cork-screw!

CHAPTER XII

THE COW

It was in May. The sultry noon seemed endlessly long. The dry earth gaped with thirst in the heat.

When I heard from the riverside a voice calling, "Come, my darling!"

I shut my book and opened the window to look out.

I saw a big buffalo with mud-stained hide, standing near the river with placid, patient eyes; and a youth, knee-deep in water, calling it to its bath.

I smiled amused and felt a touch of sweetness in my heart.

Tagore

MANY scholars have pointed out that long ago, as is indicated in that oldest of scriptures, the *Rig Veda*, the Indo-Aryans carried on cattle-breeding as their chief source of livelihood, although they practised agriculture also.

The Eastern Punjab, where they chiefly dwelt, abounds in pastoral and agrarian land. Their food was mainly vegetarian. They ate meat, but only when animals were sacrificed.*

These facts introduce us to a practical reason why the cow came to be held sacred in India. Cattle were the chief wealth of the Hindus in those days, or, to look at the matter in religious terms, as the Hindu is apt to do, rather than in the language of money, they represented God's greatest bounty to man. It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit word, *pashu*, which means cattle, reappears in our English word *pecuniary*—so close was the connection between cattle and wealth or money.

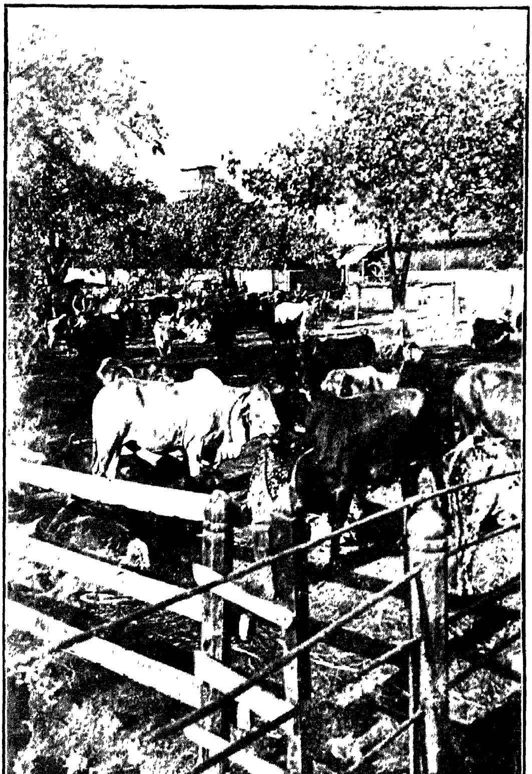
Anyone who cannot realize the close connection between the seen and the unseen, or the material and the spiritual, which exists in the Hindu mind, will never be able to understand what is meant by the statement that the cow is a sacred animal. The Hindu really believes that the cow and other things could not be brought into existence without the approval of the divine will. For them the bounty of God on earth is a symbol and even a partial presence of God himself.

*See *India's Past*, by A. A. Macdonell, p. 39.

In a spirit somewhat similar, but more remote, once a year the Hindu workmen set up their tools on a kind of altar, garland them and say prayers to them. These also represent God's bounty, for which there is much gratitude expressed on these occasions. I have seen modern dynamos and printing machines adorned with flowers and " worshipped ". To treat such things carelessly or without reverence is sacrilege.

I remember once when I was sitting with a pandit in a little town in Bengal, and he was kindly teaching me some verses from the great poet Bhartrihari, I happened to touch one of the books with my foot. The pain in the pandit's face as he hastily withdrew the book was startling to see. I took care not to do anything like that again. I remember also an occasion on which one of these people had to dispose of an old pair of sandals. He walked to a *nulla* or ditch, stepped off his sandals, saluted them, reverently thanked them for the service they had given him, and placed them behind a bush with almost ceremonial care.

I do not count it superstition, then, when people reverence the cow. Their attitude reminds me of some of Emerson's sayings:



A Home for Old Cattle.

Page 200 *Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.*



Cattle Grazing.

Page 201. *Underwood & Underwood, N. Y*

"The world exists for the education of each man," and "Who cares what the fact was, when we have made a constellation of it, to hang in heaven an immortal sign?"

That is my explanation. Let us now look at the matter through the eyes of a Hindu. Babu Bhagavan Das writes: "Hinduism has sometimes been summed up as the worship of the cow and the Brâhmana. It could not be better described in brief. For the true Brâhmana is the embodiment of wisdom and the cow is mother-love incarnate—mother-love, the divine instinct before which even wisdom stands reverent and adoring......whose overflow takes visible shape as milk, the vital fluid that helps the helpless, nourishes and gives life renewed to the infant, the feeble, the sick, the aged, when nothing else avails."*

Perhaps only those who say "grace before meat" will be able to enter fully into the spirit of gratitude and humble desire to be worthy which these words contain.

Let us now permit Miss Mayo to bring us down to earth, a function in which she is especially competent, though sometimes it seems as though we plunge right through the earth into some nether region. She tells us

*_Science of Social Organization_, p. 258.

that "the early Hindu leaders, it is surmised, seeing the importance of the cow to the country, adopted the expedient of deifying her, to save her from and for the people."*

So "Hindu India to-day venerates the cow as holy," and "to kill a cow is one of the worst of sins." Miss Mayo also mentions a superstition that it is good for a man to die holding the tail of a cow as he breathes his last. I suppose there is something in this, although I have not happened to see or hear of a case. It is, however, ridiculous to say that cows are commonly kept in houses in order that they may be at hand for this purpose.

Yes, there are some superstitions in India. Some are harmless, others are inconvenient. We have some of our own still, although we have been shedding them very rapidly during the last century. Professor Richet has written a book called *Idiot Man*. He shows in how many ways we are superstitious to the extent almost of insanity. There are superstitions about food, clothing, housing and other things, which are both inconvenient and unhealthy. I will not attempt to recount them here, but will leave the doubtful pleasure of considering them to those who care to read his book.

**Mother India*, p. 223.

It is just as well that we should know what superstition is, when there is so much talk about it. I will therefore tell a well-known little story. It is related that there was once a saintly man who had a cat which was fond of rubbing against him. When he performed his daily devotions and meditations he used to tether the cat to the bedpost, so that it would not disturb him. After his death, people wishing to follow in his steps made it a practice to obtain a bed and a cat and tie the cat to the bed to promote the success of their devotions. A little later on they performed only the easier part of this ritual, that is, they tied the cat to the bedpost, but forgot about the devotions.

I did not think that we could get far into this new subject without the aid of the Abbé Dubois. He tells us that very holy Hindus collect the urine of the cow and drink it daily. I have known many holy men in India, and I have known many people who aspire to be holy, but I have never met anyone who has followed this practice, nor I think, anyone who ever knew anyone else who followed it.

It is true that the Hindus use all the "five products of the cow" in various ways. They

use milk, also clarified butter—called *ghee*. Clarified butter is butter which has been boiled for some time, so that afterwards it will keep indefinitely. Thirdly they use curds, both sweet and sour. Of the five there remain urine and dung. These are used to wash and plaster lightly the floors and walls of mud houses; the general belief is that they have an antiseptic effect. I do not know anything about that effect personally, but as far as I know it does nobody any harm, and it does keep ants and other small insects out of the house. One Indian scientist told me that it was the ammonia in the product which is useful. For this reason also he said the country people sprinkle it on the floor of a sick-room before a visitor is admitted. Even in England there are many country people who like the smell of the cow and the shippon. The dung of the cow is, however, mainly used for fuel. On the whole India is not a well-wooded country, and fuel for cooking is scarce. But the cow-dung, beaten into flat cakes and dried in the sun, burns with intense heat and little or no smoke. The people appreciate this, for without it in many cases they would have no fire at all.

I suppose it is because all these five



On the Road.

Page 204.

Ewing Galloway, N. Y.



An Irrigation Well

Page 205.

Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.

things are very much appreciated that they are used in purification ceremonies which occasionally, though very rarely, are required. Then a little of each of the things, all mixed together, must be swallowed. Sometimes for readmission into caste after a breach of the rules, such as, for example, the eating of animal flesh, such a rite is required. It is absurd, however, to suggest, as Miss Mayo does, that to shake hands with a European would lead to that necessity.

I like Miss Mayo's picture of the cows as they are collected from one house after another* and driven out to pasture in the mornings:

> As you see them of mid-mornings, trooping in hundreds out from the cities and villages on their slow, docile way to jungle pasturage, you

*With reference to animals in the house, I notice that facing page 130 there is a picture entitled "Interior of a Hindu House." It shows a calf (who looks quite well-fed) some earthen pots and other things, seen through the doorway. Now, this is the interior of an Indian house only if we understand that the photographer is on the inside and that the little calf and other things are in the backyard, of which the picture gives us a view. This is perfectly clear to anyone who knows how the doors of a poor class Indian house are fixed. The chain near the top of the door is for fastening it on the outside; the chain lower down fastens it on the inside, and the door opens inwards into the room.

> might well fancy they know and are glad of their place in the people's mind. Bright strings of beads—blue, coral, red—adorn their necks. And in their eyes and the eyes of the bullocks, their sons, lies a look of slumbrous tranquillity. That tranquil, far-off gaze is, indeed, often remarked and acclaimed by the passing traveller as an outward sign of an inner sense of surrounding love.*

But after that graceful picture comes the following astonishing statement:

> In Holland, in England, you may observe an extraordinary tranquillity, peacefulness, friendliness, even in pastured bulls, which may reasonably be attributed to the gentle handling to which they are accustomed, to good food and much grooming, and to the freedom they enjoy. But in India, after examining facts, one is driven to conclude that the expression in the eyes of the cows is due partly to low vitality, partly to the close quarters with humanity in which they live, and for the rest, simply to the curious cut of the outer corner of the lid, subtly beautiful like an Aubrey Beardsley woman's.

Nothing good can come out of India! Even the peacefulness of the cows which is depicted as the result of the kindness which

* *Ibid*, p. 226.

they receive in Holland and England must be attributed in India merely to low vitality. But the essential point of Miss Mayo's criticism on this subject is: "They have raised food for themselves, but they will not raise food for their mother, the cow."

Mr. Alden Clark, in his article *Is India Dying*?* has replied to this better than I can. He says:

> Miss Mayo speaks of grazing lands and the feeding of rice stalks, which have little food value, and clearly implies that, aside from some green fodder in some districts, this is all that the cattle have to live upon. "By January," she declares, in regard to India's cattle, "starvation begins in earnest." This statement entirely ignores the millets which are reaped in October and February and which, as the *Indian Year Book* for 1924, page 265, rightly says, "constitute one of the most important groups of crops in the country, supplying food for the poorer classes and fodder for the cattle." Sorghum, which is the principal millet, has large, thick stalks that make splendid fodder. In the farmer's eyes the fact that this is a fodder crop is as important as the fact that it is a food crop.

**Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. 1926, p. 272.

> It seems impossible that a traveller in India could avoid seeing mile on mile of fields full of waving millet. In the villages no one could fail to note the great stacks of this fodder. In good seasons farmers sell much to the towns and store enough for two years' use by their cattle. That many Indian cattle are sadly neglected is a fact. That many more are well fed is also a fact.
>
> It seems to me in keeping with the accuracy of other parts of the book that, in speaking of the food of cattle, it wholly neglects to notice that Indian farmers devote about forty million acres to good fodder crops and that the chapter in question closes with the assertion, "They will not raise food for their mother, the cow." In Western India, to my personal knowledge, the farmer and his family have an affection for their cattle, each one of which is named. In times of scarcity the family deprives itself in order that the cattle may be fed.

Miss Mayo makes a comparison of Indian cultivation with that of the United States, in which she shows that seven-tenths of the total crop area is devoted to harvested forage. In America there are two hundred and fifty-seven million acres in crops for cattle's feed, against seventy-six million acres in crops for human food, and there is one milking cow to every

family of five.* What Miss Mayo has here omitted to state is that all that cattle feed does not go to the feeding of those milch cows. I believe it also goes in part to the development of vast numbers of cattle, pigs and fowls, which are to be killed for human food, as well as to the support of a great many horses.†

I believe it is true that the breeding of cattle in India does not come up to the scientific level which has been reached of recent years in the west. For one reason, the Hindus cannot and will not use bulls for food, but they employ them for draft purposes. It is not practical, I understand, to breed for the great supply of milk from each animal which we obtain in the west, and at the same time obtain useful strength in the bulls. Whether Indian breeders will find some way of their own for overcoming this difficulty I do not know, but I do not think we ought to criticise them for refusing to become bull-eaters simply in order to get more milk per head out of the cows. Though Indian cows give less milk

**Mother India*, p. 229. In India there is one cow to every four and a half people.

†In ten months in 1925, 60,000,000 cattle, calves, hogs, sheep and lambs were slaughtered under Federal inspection in the U. S A.

the price of milk in India is only half that in the United States, but the cost of distribution may be the cause of this difference.

I must not leave this subject without mentioning that there are some very splendid breeds of cattle in India, such as, for example, the Nellore cattle, and also that the Hindus have their own theories about milk, one of which is that thick rich milk, as we should call it, is not good for health in their climate. I have often been advised by Indian ladies not to drink such milk in India.

Miss Mayo gives us a brief account of the excellent work done in India in government dairy farms. That work seems to have begun in the year 1912 and to have been carried on very successfully since the war, so that some definite pedigree types are being fixed. They are producing cows which are capable of giving a large supply of milk even in hot latitudes. We are told that the best milkers native to India are small animals which average 3,000 pounds in a lactation period, though most of the cows in the country give only about 600 pounds. In a Government farm they have one large cow which gave 16,000 pounds in a lactation period of 305 days with one of her calves. With another of her

calves she gave 14,800 pounds. Another cow gave 15,324 pounds. Those are, of course, the best specimens.

All this is splendid work and will no doubt bear fruit in course of time. It now remains to discover whether, considering feeding and attention required by these animals, a pound of milk from them costs more than a pound of milk from the cows which are driven out from the villager's house in the morning and returned to him in the evening. If so, and the initial cost is not too great, these better animals will no doubt be eagerly sought and companies will be formed near the towns and large villages so that the household cow will gradually give place to the morning milk bottle. This, of course, raises the question of bottles, and that again of the development of the glass industry. Even the paper stoppers of the bottles have to be considered, in this country where a bit of wrapping paper and string are luxuries.

While it is true that the bulk of the cattle owners throughout India, most of whom possess only one or two animals, know little about the best methods of breeding, and are so poor that they cannot provide much good fodder for their animals, the situation does not

quite justify the statement that "the general conditions under which Indian animals have lived and propagated might have been specially devised for breeding down to the worst possible type."*

I did not know before that it was the temple bull which is specially used for propagation purposes in India, nor that when a man vows a bull to the temple, he chooses his feeblest and most misshapen.† I have been under the impression that the traditions demanded that he should give the best, and that this was the practice, though a freak is often given. Many of the temple bulls which I have seen wandering about have struck me as particularly fine animals, though I could judge only from casual observation, being no expert in the matter. This tradition of giving the best is shown in the way in which food was offered to the "wood god" by an Indian lady, as depicted in the *Light of Asia* as follows:

> . . . from our droves I took
> Milk of a hundred mothers, newly-calved,
> And with that milk I fed fifty white cows,
> And with their milk twenty-and-five, and then

**Mother India*, p. 231.
†*Ibid.*, p. 231.

With theirs twelve more, and yet again with
theirs
The six noblest and best of all our herds,
That yield I boiled with sandal and fine spice
In silver lotas, adding rice, well grown
From chosen seed, set in new-broken ground,
So picked that every grain was like a pear.*

The spirit shown here is much more in keeping with the average Hindu practice in these things than is Miss Mayo's suggestion that people offer the worst.

The Hindus carry their reverence for the cow to the point that they will not approve of the killing of this animal, however old or diseased. There have been many discussions and debates on this subject. When the European wants to pass a law providing that suffering or old animals must be killed, many Hindu voices rise in objection. It is easy for Miss Mayo to deduce from this that: "Measures for the protection of animals from cruelty have been passed over the indifference, if not over the pronounced hostility, of the Indian representation."†

The defect of the Hindu attitude appears when, for example, in the Bombay Legislative

*_The Light of Asia_, Sir Edwin Arnold, Book Six.
†_Mother India_, p. 251.

quite justify the statement that "the general conditions under which Indian animals have lived and propagated might have been specially devised for breeding down to the worst possible type."*

I did not know before that it was the temple bull which is specially used for propagation purposes in India, nor that when a man vows a bull to the temple, he chooses his feeblest and most misshapen.† I have been under the impression that the traditions demanded that he should give the best, and that this was the practice, though a freak is often given. Many of the temple bulls which I have seen wandering about have struck me as particularly fine animals, though I could judge only from casual observation, being no expert in the matter. This tradition of giving the best is shown in the way in which food was offered to the "wood god" by an Indian lady, as depicted in the *Light of Asia* as follows:

. . . from our droves I took
Milk of a hundred mothers, newly-calved,
And with that milk I fed fifty white cows,
And with their milk twenty-and-five, and then

******Mother India*, p. 231.
†*Ibid.*, p. 231.

With theirs twelve more, and yet again with
theirs
The six noblest and best of all our herds,
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**The Light of Asia*, Sir Edwin Arnold, Book Six.

†*Mother India*, p. 251.

Council debate Mr. Montgomerie—arguing that when an old animal has been hurt in the street the most humane thing to do is to put the beast out of its misery, as it cannot be moved—asks "Is it a decent sight to see some poor animal disembowelled, legs broken and bleeding, in the streets of Bombay ?" It is hardly fair of Miss Mayo to call this "a picture from the daily life of the city."*

Yet Hindu opposition to killing cows also has an eye to the economic effect of any loosening of the present sentiment on the subject. It might lead to the custom of killing a cow as soon as it is no longer very useful to us. Then economic competition would tend to force all people to do the same thing, just as all nations had to take to poison gas when one began to use it.

Miss Mayo quotes Mr. Gandhi—he is very useful on account of his constant denunciation of evils—to the effect that "cow worship has resolved itself into an ignorant fanaticism,"† by which I am sure he meant nothing more than that while the sense of the idea was good, some people are apt to concentrate on certain narrow aspects of the matter, ignoring others.

**Ibid*, p. 253.

† *Young India*, Feb. 26, 1925.

The result of this is that many people are guilty of sins of omission who would shrink from sins of commission towards the animals. Therefore it is possible that there is some cruelty, and in the asylums for old cows some neglect, in addition to the common poverty and want which so largely afflicts man and beast alike.

Miss Mayo gives an instance: " As a Hindu you are not disturbed in conscience by selling your good cow to a butcher because it is he, not you, who will kill the cow." Yet she also tells us of people who not only do not sell their cows to the butchers, but who go to the butchers and buy from them cows which other people have sold to them, in order to prevent them from being killed. She mentions favorably "The Association for Saving Milch Cattle from Going to the Bombay Slaughter House", the report of which states that nearly two hundred and thirty thousand cows were slaughtered in Bombay city in five years, and appeals for help to end all this bloodshed.* The society has a herd of two hundred and seventy-seven milch cows. So evidently some Hindus are "disturbed in conscience."

In other cases, Miss Mayo asserts, you go

*_Mother India_, p. 2?7.

to the butcher, sell him your best cow and then with a part of the money received from him buy the worst cow in his shambles, and give that to the home for aged cows, and thus acquire religious merit! I can understand a man buying the animal among those he sees which most excites his pity, and arranging for its protection, but when men buy things for religious purposes I believe they buy the best they can afford.

She also relates a statement made to her by "a Western animal lover". He went to a cow asylum and saw an animal which was suffering from maggots. He asked the keeper whether he could not do something for her. He replied "honestly enough", "Why should I? What for?" Notice the expression "honestly enough." Presumably, if he had said anything else, we should not have believed him. I have noticed the use of the word "frankly" a great many times in "Mother India". When a man tells Miss Mayo something disagreeable he is "frank". It is also stated that the attendants at the animal asylums steal the food and the money intended for the animals. I cannot prove that they do not. Can Miss Mayo prove that they do? Perhaps some do and others do not.

Chapter XIII

CRUELTY

Now heaven forbid this barbed shaft descend
Upon the fragile body of a fawn,
Like fire upon a heap of tender flowers!
Can thy steel bolts no meeter quarry find
Than the warm life-blood of a harmless deer?
Restore, great Prince, thy weapon to its
quiver;
More it becomes thy arms to shield the weak
Than to bring anguish on the innocent.

Shakūntalā

"MOTHER INDIA" opens an argument on Indian cruelty with the words of "an old veterinarian" who says: "This country is the cruellest in the world, to animals."* Another would say that it is the kindest. These personal opinions are very dramatic and very convincing to thoughtless people, but they are not worth much, except for the purpose of exciting those people, so that they can be led by their emotions instead of by their heads.

Sheltering behind that statement, like

**Mother India*, p. 269.

Macduff's army behind the moving trees, follows Miss Mayo's own opinion: "It would perhaps be fairer to repeat that the people of India follow their religions, which...... produce no mercy either to man or to beast, in the sense that we of the West know mercy."

As this question of cruelty has thus been put on a religious basis, let us have the matter out by making comparisons, in a spirit of perfect fair play. Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism all agree in regarding man "as a god" to the animals. Different deductions are made by individuals in each case as to the meaning of this relation. Some look upon it as requiring man to act towards animals with moral responsibility and kindness. Others take it to mean that the animals exist merely for man's use and pleasure.

The Rev. Walter S. Summers, a Catholic priest, and professor at Georgetown University, arguing against a lady who was supporting vegetarianism and anti-vivisection* on grounds of kindness, said:

> If she believes in the Bible she can turn to the opening chapters of the book of Genesis and find that in the plan of creation dominion was given man over all the creatures of the earth

*I am, of course, not discussing these subjects.

under man. Dominion! It is rather hard for a mere human being to change the law and the privilege granted the human race by God Himself.

Now if we have dominion and the power of killing game for food, killing animals for food, it is but an easy step to say that since the food is intended for the sustenance of human life we may also use those animals where human life is endangered. Pain is occasioned, of course, in the killing of any animal, whether it is sudden or whether it is prolonged. There is only the difference of degree in the pain. If it is conceded that we may kill animals to sustain life, it is an easy, logical conclusion to say that we can inflict pain by experiments on animals to prolong and save life. The object is the same, and the animal has been put there, as it is expressly declared in the Scripture, for man's use. To deny man the God-given dominion over lower life is to place human emotion on a higher plane than Divine authority.*

*_Experiments Upon Living Dogs_, (Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.), p. 104. This way of looking at the Bible would result in two things—our claiming the right to follow its leadership in all things, including the slaughter of women and children, and our suppression of the best parts of our nature when these happen to conflict with something written in that old library. It reminds me of a man who once told me that when he went to heaven he would be quite reconciled to seeing his mother suffering eternally in hell, because "God will make it acceptable to me."

Buddha also saw animals as being under the dominion of man, but the lesson he drew from it was that man being "as a God to these" must be merciful to them and not kill them, so that all living things be linked

> In friendliness and common use of foods
> Bloodless and pure; the golden grain, bright fruits,
> Sweet herbs which grow for all, the waters wan,
> Sufficient meats and drinks.

Hinduism follows Buddhism in this view. Both teach *ahimsa* or harmlessness, and direct men as far as possible to avoid killing. Hinduism enjoins killing sometimes, as for example, when a soldier is doing his duty.* Mr. Gandhi argues that sometimes killing is a lesser sin than non-killing, as for example, in the case of a rabid dog.

Under these circumstances the question ceases to be a religious one. It is a pity that Miss Mayo has put it on that basis. It resolves itself into the question: "Everywhere there is cruelty. How much *unnecessary* cruelty is there in India and in the West? Which is more cruel?"

Two concessions must be made, one on

*See *Bhagavad Gita*, ii, 12, 13, 20—7.

each side, on points on which there can be no yielding. The West insists that meat-eating and vivisection* are justifiable. The Hindu will under no circumstances countenance cow-killing. Setting these two concessions aside, we will put forward the argument as to cruelty, giving first Miss Mayo's charges and then the Hindu counter-charges.

It is asserted that Indian drivers of bullock carts twist the bulls' tails in order to make them go quickly, and not uncommonly break the connections of the vertebræ, which must cause great pain. It is often true.

This is very largely due to thoughtlessness, but at the same time unfortunately the trouble is very deep seated. The drivers of these carts in towns like Calcutta are themselves dependent upon their employers. They must be able to show that they are good drivers, that they can make speed and do a good day's work, otherwise they will find themselves out of work. The employers are very largely immense European firms. Has any one such firm ever issued instructions to these drivers not to twist the bulls' tails? Has it ever been intimated to

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*In Great Britain alone there were in 1928 nearly 316,000 recorded experiments, less than 15,000 of which were performed with anaesthetics.

them that they must not overload the carts and that it does not matter if in the interests of humanitarianism the journey takes a little longer ?

The same causes operate also in other countries. I remember how I was shocked again and again when as a boy in England, living near some new building operations, I saw the way in which carters kicked their horses in the stomach with hob-nailed boots in order to force them to additional efforts to get their loads over the rough ground. I see now that I ought not to have been angry with those men, for their employment and the food of their wives and children depended upon their success. Only law which stops all from doing such a wrong can save the average man from the necessity of doing it.

There is much carelessness among Indians, but our modern methods of commerce are largely behind it. They do not hesitate even to employ men as beasts of burden, pulling huge heavily laden carts. These may be seen any day in the streets of Madras ; if one cares to stand at the bridge over the river Cooum near the gates of the Government House one can watch them struggling, panting and sweating, and almost dropping in their efforts

to pull their loads up that slight rise. The carts belong mostly to the big European firms. These men may not die in agony but they live in something very near it.

Another charge relates to a practice of skinning goats alive, the idea being that the skin can be stretched a little larger than that from a dead goat, and will therefore bring a slightly higher price. This is, of course, a crime. Thirty-four cases were brought up in one province in 1925. I do not know how many people there are in that province, or how many more cases were not brought up. It is bad enough, and no one wants to minimize any attention that can be drawn to such cases, but these criminal cases should not be put forward in a foreign country in a context which will give all but the most careful readers the impression that this represents average practice. A peculiarly offensive addition to the reference to this matter occurs in the words: "But light fines, meted out by Indian judges, whose sentiment is not shocked, are soon worked off in the extra price fetched by the next batch of flayed-alive skins."

I have heard in England of pigs being hung up by the hind legs and soused with boiling water before being killed, so that the

bristles will come out easily, but I suppose that also is a criminal act. and does not represent common practice. Then there is that dreadful case of the torturing of geese for the production of *pâtè de foie gras*. In this case I am told that the geese are put in little coops, that their feet are permanently nailed to the floor through the webbing, and that food is then systematically stuffed down their throats. This stuffing, which the birds bitterly resent, with the lack of exercise, fattens the liver to about four times its normal size. This is illegal in some of the American States, but it goes on in Europe, and the imported product appears regularly on American tables. That most cruelty in West or East is due to thoughtlessness is shown by the fact that people can eat such things as that without being nauseated. Custom kills imagination, and with it pity.

It is declared that in the streets of some very large towns great cruelty appears in connection with milk supplies. Many cows are stimulated to the increase and prolongation of milk production by internal irritation with rough straw on the end of a stick. This practice is forbidden by law and incurs a heavy penalty. Yet, strange to say, a writer in *Young India* is quoted as stating that "out of

ten thousand cows in Calcutta dairy sheds, five thousand are daily subjected to this process." Still worse: "By feeding the cow only on mango leaves with no other form of food or water to drink, the animal passes in the form of urine a dye which is sold at high rates in the bazaar. The animal so treated does not last long and dies in agony." Miss Mayo shows us, in addition, a picture of a stuffed calf which is used to excite the mother's milk. (I have never seen such a calf in all my years in India. They must be rare.) She also mentions that sometimes new-born calves are pushed upon the morning garbage carts at the dairy door. This, of course, could possibly occur only in a few of the greatest cities. It is news to me. I have heard that many hundreds of new-born kittens used to be found alive in the garbage tins of New York and other cities, but never of this.

Comparable with this horrible cruelty in the obtaining of milk is that relating to the production of furs in the West. The Hindus do not kill to satisfy human vanity and great luxury. One writer estimates the number of animals, large and small, cruelly trapped at 100,000,000 annually, and has worked this out as representing "200,400,000,000 torture hours."

This is far beyond the imagination. The writer adds:

> We who speak English despise the Spaniard for his sadistic bull fights. But we can seriously estimate, I think, that it takes more cruelty to make an ordinary fur coat than to make a bull fight. The elaborate wraps containing many pelts may surpass in agony a gladiatorial show of Imperial Rome. The sybaritic lady who owns a magnificent cloak containing 200 or 300 skins can flatter herself with the reflection that for every minute she wears it some little animal has been tortured for a whole hour.*

It may be our view that furs obtained in this way are necessary for our women in winter, and sometimes also for men in the colder regions. I should argue that whatever the necessity may be, furs obtained in this way are not necessary. Relatively, I should prefer the furs obtained in the manner of the fox-farms, where the creatures are bred and well-fed and cared for and ultimately killed without torture, but perhaps it is not necessary to go even so far, for many millions of sheep are killed for food and sheepskins are quite warm, and could no doubt be got up beautifully.

**The Steel-Trapping Age*, Edward P. Buffet, A. S. P. C. A.

Worse still is the habit of shooting and hunting for sport. Woe to the man who shoots a fox by mistake, although the votaries of fox hunting excuse their cruelty on the ground that they are exterminating troublesome vermin. What shall we say with regard to the people who deliberately cultivate birds and then send them up into the air for the convenience of the sportsman, to be shot in all parts of the body ?

Another unnecessary form of cruelty was invented a few years ago—for the delight of children ! In London letters have appeared in the press respecting Easter eggs decorated with little chickens. Millions of dainty fluffy little ducks are bred, to be almost immediately placed in an oven, so as to destroy them without injuring their beauty. Glass eyes are then placed in their little heads, and the result is a toy for children, on the market at Easter time. It is said that one of the large shop-keepers in London returned his consignment on learning how the toys were made. I believe these ducklings were not made in England, but imported.

After considering such things as I have just cited, who can say that Indians are more cruel to animals than we are ?

CHAPTER XIV

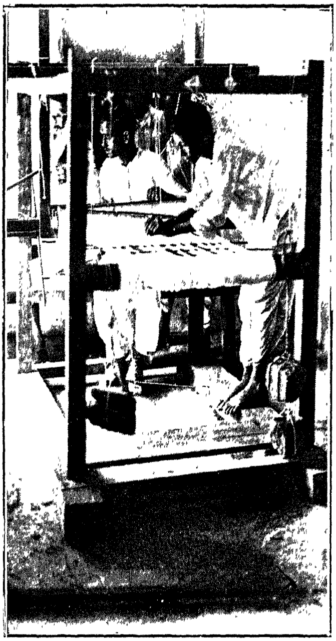
BOYS' EDUCATION

Truly, richer than all riches, better than the best of gain,
Wisdom is, unbought, secure—once won, none loseth her again.
Bringing dark things into daylight, solving doubts that vex the mind,
Like an open eye is Wisdom—he that hath her not is blind.

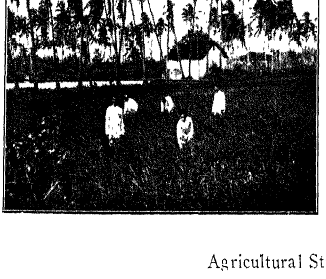
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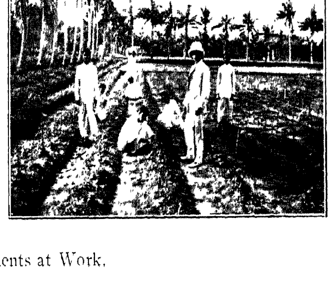
IN this chapter I will reply to the statement that Indians "love their illiteracy". It is a mistake to imagine that Indian people do not want to give education to their children, and that they have not provided it in the past.

In the old days of the "village republics" there was provision in each village for a schoolmaster along with the other functionaries in village service. In those days the land did not belong to any particular person, but to the village as a whole, and all the affairs of the

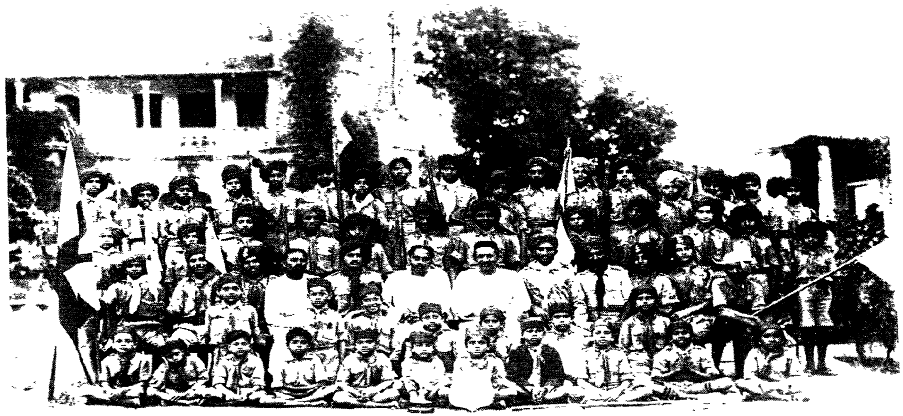


Boys Learning Weaving





Agricultural Students at Work.



Boy Scouts

Page 229.

village were governed by a body of elected councillors, who planned out the work, which was mainly agricultural, and arranged for the distribution of the produce to all the villagers, and for the king's share. Some who were not agriculturists were also employed by the village, and these received a share of the produce. Included in this list was the school-master.

This was confirmed by the statement of Sir Thomas Munro, who gave evidence before both Houses of Parliament in 1813 that there were schools in every village, and that the people were well versed in the three R's. To "this venerable and benevolent institution of the Hindus" says a dispatch of the East India Company in 1814, was "ascribed the general intelligence of the natives as scribes and accountants."

During the debates in Parliament on the Indian Question in 1853 John Bright said that while Government had overthrown almost entirely the native education that had subsisted throughout the country so universally that a schoolmaster was regular a feature in every village as the Patil or headman, it had done next to nothing to supply the deficiency which had been created.

Mr. J. Keir Hardie writes: "Max Müller,

on the strength of official documents and a missionary report concerning education in Bengal prior to the British occupation, asserts that there were then 80,000 native schools in Bengal, or one for every 400 of the population. Ludlow, in his *History of British India,* says that "In every Hindu village which has retained its old form I am assured that the children generally are able to read, write and cipher, but where we have swept away the village system, as in Bengal, there the village school also has disappeared."*

I do not wish to speak here of higher education, but that was by no means neglected. There were great Universities in India. That at Nalanda contained as many as ten thousand students. Scholars have declared that in Science, Phonetics, Grammar, Mathematics, Anatomy, Medicine and Law, the attainment of Indians was far in advance of what was achieved by the Greeks.

Since 1816 the village schools have died away to such an extent that now-a-days only about eight per cent. of the population is literate in the territory directly governed by the British Raj. In the State of Baroda, where H. H. the Gaekwar has provided free

**India, Impressions and Suggestions,* J. Keir Hardie, p. 5.

schools, nearly one hundred per cent. of the boys and a large percentage of the girls of school-going age are at school. In 1909 Baroda was educating nearly eighty per cent. of its boys and close upon fifty per cent. of its girls. This shows that the people of India, in that State at all events, have not been loving illiteracy. The State of Travancore in South India runs Baroda close, with eighty-one per cent. of boys, though there is a smaller percentage of girls, so far.

Compare these figures with those for British India, which stood in 1909 at twenty-one and one-half per cent. for boys and four per cent. for girls. In that year the Gaekwar was spending thirteen cents per head for education, while we were spending only two cents per head. The Baroda *Administration Report* for 1926-7 shows an expenditure on education of nearly 3,300,000 rupees out of a revenue of 24,600,000. There are also 45 town and 655 village libraries, serving 60 per cent. of the population. I have also seen the excellent travelling village libraries in Baroda State; the boxes of books are all changed at intervals through the chief library.

It does not take a long time to make a nation literate, as some seem to think. In

England it took twelve years from the date when free and compulsory education was established to raise the percentage of children at school from a low figure to nearly one hundred per cent. In Japan it took twenty-four years to advance the percentage from twenty-eight to nearly one hundred.

Inquirers ask: "Why the decay of the village schools under the British Raj?" To comprehend this we must understand something of old village conditions. In the old village republics the schoolmaster was paid in kind, like everybody else. Even the king was so paid. In return for services consisting mainly of protection of the village from aggression, he also took a portion of the village produce. This generally involved no great hardship, for it was easy for the villagers to produce more than they needed for themselves. The king left the village to deal with all its own internal affairs, including administration and justice.*

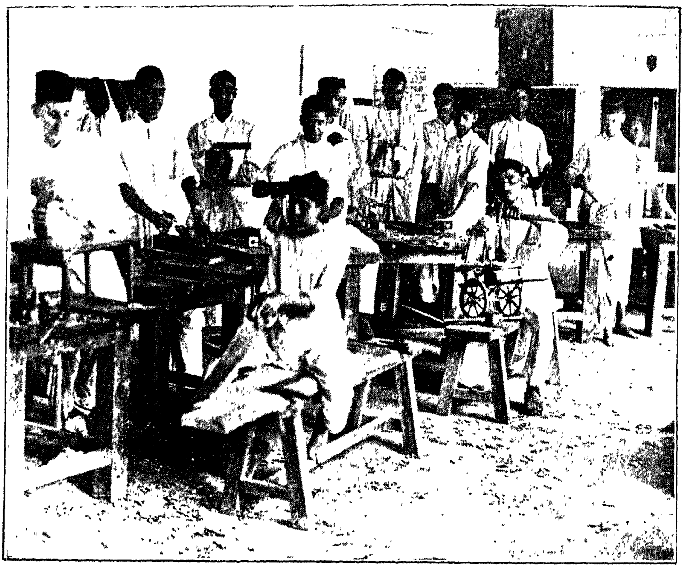
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*The King of Takshashila once said in reply to a question: "I have no power over the subjects of my kingdom: I am not their lord and master, I have only jurisdiction over those who revolt and do wrong." (Quoted in *India*; *A Bird's Eye View*, by Lord Ronaldshay, p. 136. See also *The Science of Social Organization* by Bhagavan Das, pp. 263 *et seq.*)



School Boys Gardening.

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Boys Learning Carpentry

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I may mention incidentally that he usually kept great stores of foodstuffs, so that in a bad season he could prevent suffering and starvation by giving this out freely. Big granaries, now in disuse, are still to be seen here and there.

In 1816 the East India Company began the destruction of the old village system by substituting paid officers of the Company for the old elected councillors.* To-day the land is in private ownership, most of the villagers are landless, and they work for wages. The officials—a village munsif or judge, and a village karnam or accountant, are both appointed by Government, and paid a small salary, which approximates seven to fifteen dollars a month. They are under the direction of a higher

*The Decentralization Committee appointed by King Edward VII in 1907 reported that the villages "formerly possessed a large degree of local autonomy. This autonomy has now disappeared, owing to the establishment of local Civil and Criminal Courts, the present Revenue and Police organization, the increase of communication, the growth of individualism and the operation of the individual ryotwari system, which is extending even in the north of India. Nevertheless, the village remains the first unit of administration, the principal village functionaries—the headman, the accountant and the village watchman—are largely utilised and paid by the Government, and there is still a certain amount of common village feeling and interests."

official living in a market town some miles away. He in turn is subordinate to district officials and they in turn to the provincial Governor. Every field is measured and assessed for land taxation, which is really a tax on crops, for the tax is usually based upon an estimate of probable crops valued at market rates. The man who owns the field in these days (often an absentee landlord) employs laborers, sells his produce for cash and pays his land tax in cash. If there is a bad season, the landless laborers are thrown out of work, and they have no money to buy food or anything else.

If under these new circumstances the village wants to have a school, it must pay the schoolmaster in cash, or follow the in-between method of asking the schoolmaster to accept miscellaneous gifts in lieu of pay. Certainly if the villagers are willing to provide some funds for a school, the Government will supplement those funds with a grant, but only provided that the teacher is paid in cash and not by presents, and generally that he shall be a man trained as a teacher in some institution under Government control. Now, as to the money there is a difficulty. If a village is far from the railway it may be that there is very little money available and the owners of fields must

save up all they can to pay the land tax in coin. Most of the laborers are too poor to pay anything but the most trifling amount of school fees for their children.* It is no wonder under these conditions that there are now many villages without schools.

I remember well one village about thirty-six miles from the nearest railway station, where I spent a little time. There was quite a pleasant school there, held in a portion of a house belonging to one of the local landowners. The teacher, an elderly gentleman, was being supported by miscellaneous gifts. It was proposed to bring this school into line with the Government system so that some grant-in-aid might be obtained. Objection was at once raised by the inspecting officer to the system of giving presents to the schoolmaster, on the ground that he would surely pay most attention to the children of those who sent him the best presents. The people tried to adapt them-

*Some years ago Sir William Hunter, a great Anglo-Indian authority, stated that forty millions of the Indian people pass through life with only one meal a day. Sir Charles Elliot estimated that seventy millions in India do not know what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied even once in a year. Personal observation would lead me to the opinion that this poverty is becoming more acute.

selves to the new system, raised a little cash for some time, and obtained a trained teacher, but as it was impossible to secure regularity of funds, the next time I came round to that village I found there was no school at all. It is in this and similar ways that the schools have died down.

In America education is provided free, in some States (*e.g.*, California) even in the Universities. The Commerce Department at Washington announced that in 250 cities having a population of more than 30,000 the allotment of funds for schools was thirty-seven per cent. of the total city payments. In America this is regarded as a good civic investment. But in India Mr. Gokhale had occasion to ask, after the English and Japanese figures had reached the level which I have already quoted: "If in England and the Colonies from ten to twenty per cent. of the revenue raised by taxation returns to the people in the shape of education, why should we alone be asked to be satisfied with a pittance of less than two per cent. ?"

The allotment of Indian revenue for educational purposes is very little, as compared with that provided for the army, which is over forty per cent. of the total revenue.

Indian public men have long been clamoring for a transfer of a small proportion from the army to education. The reason why this request is not granted is that a large portion of the Indian army must consist of British troops, and even the Indian regiments have almost entirely British officers. The pay of these officers and troops is much greater than what would be necessary for Indians. It is based on British standards of prosperity and of living, not on that of the Indian taxpayers who provide the money. Further, you cannot keep white men for any length of time in India. Regiments must therefore be frequently transported. In addition, therefore, to the maintenance of a large army on the spot, the Indian revenue must pay about Rs. 2,000,000 as cost of transportation, as well as pensions for retired officers no longer resident in India. There is a similar great expense in the higher ranks of the civil service. That is why there is not enough money for education.*

*Between 1882 and 1907 military expenditure increased by 130 million rupees, civil by 80 million, and education by a little over 1½ million. These are Mr. Gokhale's figures. Why should there be so much talk about missionary education in India and so much gratitude on the part of the Indians? In England, Japan or America, it is not necessary to educate the people with money from abroad.

A great effort was made in 1911 to advance legislation with reference to education by the eminent Indian, Mr. G. K. Gokhale. The Council allowed his bill to be introduced. It was circulated by the Local Governments among Boards and other bodies then dominated by official opinion. In 1912, Mr. Gokhale moved that the Bill be referred to a select committee. But his great effort to educate the people of India was not successful, for the Bill was rejected by thirty-eight votes to thirteen. But since the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms came in, by which schools (but not Universities) became a "transferred" subject, the Indian Ministers before the end of 1923 had passed Bills for introducing free education in seven Provinces out of nine. The great difficulty in the way of these reforms is lack of funds.

Nevertheless, the latest figures show that in one province alone, after the control of education was transferred to the Indian Ministry, the number of scholars rose in five years from 500,357 to 1,086,087. In the schools for adults the number increased from 18,000 to 98,000, and pupils belonging to the depressed classes, or outcastes, advanced to 19,000. Nearly 2,000 areas of the province voluntarily

applied to be placed under a system of compulsory education, and poor parents were reported as being prepared to make almost any sacrifice for it.

I will relate two or three instances to illustrate my own frequent experiences as to the widespread desire for education, and the frequent difficulty in the way of obtaining it. Naturally, at present there cannot be a High School in every village, nor even in every market town. It therefore follows that those who wish to send their children to High School must often send them away from home to some town from ten to a hundred miles away.

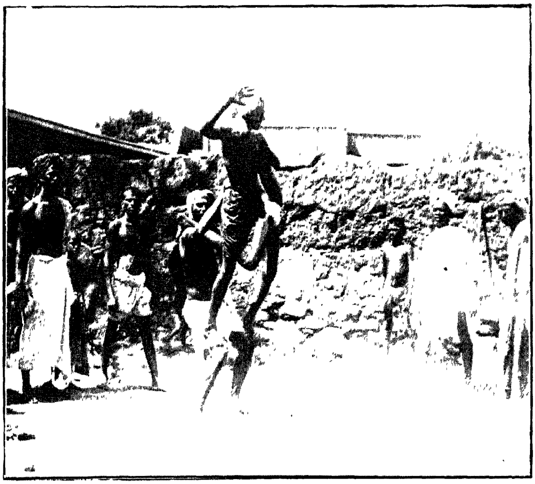
A typical case was that of a gentleman, who was a clerk in Government service, receiving sixty rupees* a month. This gentleman, a Brahman of old family, was considered to have done very well in life. He had obtained his lucrative post because in his youth he had passed the Matriculation Examination of the Madras University, which was also the passport to Government clerkships at Rs. 30 a month, and by diligent work he had risen in middle age to Rs. 60 a month. This man lived in a small town where there was no High School.

*About $20 or £4.

He had three sons, and wished that they should all rise to his own level in the world. This meant that they had to go to a High School for at least three years, because there is no admission to the examination by private study, but only through the recognized High Schools. The cost per month of sending one son to High School was somewhat as follows :— Fees, 4 rupees; books, 2 rupees; hostel charges, 12 rupees; railway fares, etc, 2 rupees. It is now a matter of simple arithmetic: the cost of educating three sons at Rs. 20 per month each equals Rs. 60. But his entire income, with which he had to maintain himself and his wife and also two or three daughters was only Rs. 60!

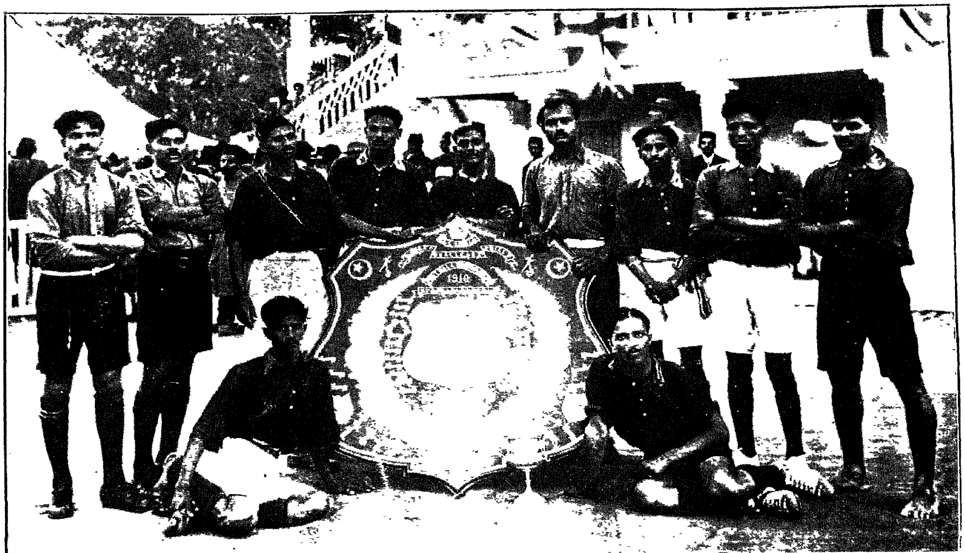
Therefore it is not an economically sound proposition for a man like my friend in Government service to educate his sons up to his own standard, unless he happens to live near a High School. Because of this, thousands of boys of the literary class spend a portion of their time going round begging for money to pay school fees. There must be hundreds of thousands of these youngsters who are breaking the hearts of sympathetic people in India, and yet the gossips dare to say that India does not want education.





Village Sports.

Page 240.



Footballers.

Page 241. *Wide World Photos.*

Of course, when a parent has such difficulty in giving higher education to his boys, he cannot afford to pay for the girls as well. The boys must be considered first, because they are the breadwinners of the family. But if Miss Mayo had gone to some of the Indian States which are most progressive (educationally speaking), she would have found that there are splendid High Schools there, which are full of girls, just as the boys' schools are full of boys. It is true that early marriage tends to deplete the higher classes in these girls' schools, but that is a matter which I must reserve for another chapter.

In one place I opened an elementary school for girls, and put in a good teacher. Within a very short time we had three hundred girls and could not find room for the many more who wanted to come in.

In another case I collected the money for a country college, to be affiliated with the Madras University. I acquired about seventy acres of land, put up and equipped the buildings, and engaged the staff. When the University Commission arrived to inspect the place they told us that in their opinion it would not attract many students. Would we be prepared to bear the loss, they asked, if only eighteen

students, which was their estimate, arrived. I said we would, and after much opposition we obtained our affiliation to the Madras University. What happened was what I knew would happen, as my mind was not hampered by the usual club gossip, but contained some real knowledge about the people—we had about three hundred students within a little over a year, some of whom came from great distances, a few from even more than two thousand miles.

Miss Mayo states that in India no educated man wants to serve in a village, and therefore the villages are starved for teachers. This is a question of money, not of willingness or unwillingness to live in a village. The pay of the teacher is so minute that no teacher would go there except as a last resort. That is why the inefficiency is great. Perhaps if the system of gifts were once more developed, many Brâhmans would come forward to work mainly for gifts. In fact, there would be elementary schools in competition with each other, which would stimulate the teachers. The teacher might take a personal interest in his work and become an artist instead of an artisan. But to put the school not on an economic but on a financial basis means in most cases to have no school at all. Psychologically, I think that

on the whole the teachers prefer the village life, for it is full of peace and kindness, which suits very well the Hindu mind. The literary classes of India do not seek excitement—do not want novels, moving pictures or motor-cars—simply because they are not interested in those things. Let me present a typical example of their interests:

A certain teacher in the south of India, whom I had the pleasure of counting among my friends, when at home during his leisure hours, was interested in three or four things. First of all, I think, came his children. There were three little ones, two girls and a boy, and he used to play with them, rolling them about and laughing while they climbed over him. Next, he was fond of music, and he played the *vina* very well indeed. Thirdly, he delighted in meditation, and would sit for an hour or two meditating, not as some Western persons do, as a sort of duty or practice, but for the sheer delight of it. And, finally, he liked a game of chess, in which his play was uncommonly subtle. This gentleman was quite a typical Brahman. Such men can be had by hundreds of thousands in India. They would be very happy living in the villages. But there is not the money—that is the whole trouble.

Notwithstanding present conditions, the description which Miss Mayo gives us of the village schoolmaster is generally far from true :

> The village school-teacher is in general some dreary incompetent, be he old or young—a heavy wet blanket slopped down upon a helpless mass of little limp arms and legs and empty, born-tired child noddles. Consequently anything duller than the usual Indian village school this world will hardly produce. Fish-eyed listlessness sits upon its brow, and its veins run flat with boredom.*

The picture is greatly overdone, for in a small village school you have a large number of children, sitting round the walls of the room, and all reading from their books at the same time. They are all doing different lessons, yet they have such concentration that no one listens to the other, and the teacher has usually developed a sense by which he can listen to all at once and stop any child who makes a mistake, so as to put him right. My experience of the old village schools is that they are busy places; and certainly they make a tremendous noise.

Miss Mayo mentions that very often the village agriculturist is an obstacle in the way

**Mother India*, p. 215.

of educational progress. He is poor and needs the children at home or in the fields or with the cattle, in order that the few pennies that they can earn may increase the family exchequer. Every country has had that difficulty, and that is why we cannot leave the spread of education to take place without legislation, but must empower the local authorities to declare it compulsory as well as free, as soon as they can provide the schools.

Under the caption "Give me Office or Give me Death", Miss Mayo complains that the Brâhman students especially seek that form of education which leads to Government service and the learned professions, instead of taking up technical lines of study. First of all let us understand clearly that wherever there is a chance of making a living along lines suitable to their type the students will take it. There is very little scope at present for making a living in India in all the modern branches of industry which are connected with science. The reason for that is the same which has caused India to become almost entirely an agricultural country, whereas two hundred years ago and more she was largely a manufacturing country. It is nearly impossible to develop new industries when in their early

stages they are almost sure to be beaten down by powerful foreign competition. What is required in India is a government policy which will protect all the small industries which, for example, have been developed by that means in Japan. This applies especially to cottage industries.

I was once associated very closely with a fine old gentleman, Mr. Doddana Setty, in the management of a big technical school in Bangalore. It is in the centre of the city, and has a handsome building well known to everybody there. The value of the school when I was helping to manage it was two and a quarter lakhs of rupees, that is to say, about $100,000 or £20,000. That sounds little in America or Britain, but it looked very big indeed to us in India, and the school offered provision for some hundreds of students.

There was a department for weaving to which many people used to come from the villages. They stayed a while and learned, and then went back and tried to set up local industries. There were always plenty of students, but I cannot say that it was a great success, for the simple reason that the weaving did not offer much prospect of money-making.

I have also been concerned in inducing

students to take up courses in applied science, commerce and agriculture. Generally they have found posts in the commercial field, but those who took up applied science have had great difficulty in practical life. There is very little scope in this, and there is a tendency for the Anglo-Indian community to grasp most of the opportunities there are along this line, as for example, in connection with the railways and electrical companies. Technical schools can only flourish in a land in which techinical manufactures are taking place on a reasonable scale. It is economic conditions which lie at the back of this class of educational problems, and in India they have little to do with the popular psychology of the people.

Another thing that tends to keep the gently nurtured Brâhman student away from the technical line, however, is the roughness of the life in workshops, where there are foremen and others who, while quite well-meaning, are nevertheless often rough in their manners and coarse in their speech. These are things so repugnant to these gentle people that they would rather die than submit to such conditions. Miss Mayo calls this egocentricity. I call it refinement. This sensitiveness is not to be despised. The mariner's compass

needle is a delicate instrument, but is not inferior on that account.

It would, of course, be perfectly silly for Brâhman students to take to manual labor when there are hundreds of millions of people in the country who are already qualified for that, and generally speaking half of them are on the verge of starvation.

Brâhman boys are usually ambitious. They would like to rise to great heights in public service. There is much discontent because the higher offices on most lines are not fully open to them, but are mainly reserved for Europeans. They feel bitterly the fact that Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858 has so far been very illiberally interpreted. The message ran that:

> So far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge.

This discontent was felt even as far back as the year 1869, when the Duke of Argyle, who was later Secretary of State for India, speaking in the House of Lords, said that "with regard to the employment of natives in the government of their country, in the Covenanted

Service, formerly of the Company and now of the Crown, I must say that we have not fulfilled our duty or the promises and engagements which we have made."*

Such offices as are available are eagerly sought, and the young men seek that sort of education which admits to the offices. It is part of the scheme of government that the recognized schools and colleges are linked up with these official positions. It is only those who hold certificates from these schools and colleges who are admissible. There is absolutely no room whatever for the free lance, or for the self-educated man, or for private educational systems. There are no separate civil service examinations open to all. All this is helping to prevent the existence of private schemes of education and tuition. It is no wonder, then, that the young men crowd into those schools which will give them at least a chance later on of getting a post.

Let me explain another point in which I found great difficulty in connection with some students. Practically all over the British Empire the University of London holds its matriculation examination. In many parts of

*Quoted by Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule* in India, p. 46.

the Empire there are private tutors and tutorial schools, some of them being correspondence schools operating on an immense scale, preparing students for the London University matriculation, intermediate and degree examinations.

Almost all over the British Empire there are thousands of students who enter for those examinations, which are held at many centres. Some of them are village boys and girls who study diligently their correspondence courses, and if they pass are certified as educated. They can aim at becoming teachers, or they can enter for civil service examinations. This provides vast educational opportunities for several classes of persons—those who live far away from all the schools, those who have to work for a living while they study, and no doubt many others.

I wanted to arrange such a system of correspondence education and private teaching for some students in the Madras Presidency, but I found that the London University was not permitted to hold its examinations there, because that would involve competition with the Madras University, and furthermore it might involve the danger of some indiscipline in the schools attached to the Educational Department, which alone could send up students for the Secondary School-Leaving

Certificate of the Presidency or the matriculation examination of the University.

Next I tried the scheme of arranging for the students to go to Colombo for the London examinations, after doing their studying in India, but soon I found that here, too, a bar had been set up, in a regulation to the effect that students coming from India could not be admitted to the examination in Ceylon, unless they first resided in Ceylon for a period which I think was three years, or else were possessed of some white blood.

Personally, I believe that if these facilities had not been denied to the Indians, and as far as I am aware to the Indians alone in all the Empire, many of them would have obtained higher education in this way, though not "under strict guidance." It is really adding insult to injury to complain of the way in which the students flock to the one source of education through which they may be able to get a living afterwards.

I cannot pass over Miss Mayo's gibe at those who have taken University degrees and then cannot find situations. This amusing but painful diatribe is as follows:

> "Government," they repeat, "sustains the university. Government is responsible for its

> existence. What does it mean by accepting our fees for educating us and then not giving us the only thing we want education for? Cursed be the Government! Come, let us drive it out and make places for ourselves and our friends."
>
> Nor is there anywhere that saving humor of public opinion whose Homeric laugh would greet the American lad, just out of Yale or Harvard or Leland Stanford, who should present his shining sheepskin as a draft on the Treasury Department, and who should tragically refuse any form of work save anti-government agitation if the draft were not promptly cashed.*

If Miss Mayo will take the trouble to make a list, covering the last forty years, of the men most active and prominent in the work of political progress, she will find that they were all men who have been eminently successful in ordinary life, and often on the very highest rungs of the ladder in the professional and the business world. The men who attend in their tens of thousands the various social and political congresses which occur every Christmas week are the successful men of the towns and villages from which they come.

I must not leave this question of education without affirming that literacy and education

**Mother India*, p. 188.

are not the same thing. There is still a great deal of education in India among the illiterate. All the children hear from their mothers the great traditional stories in India, some of which are very beautiful indeed. These stories largely concern what may be called the politics of daily life, moral lessons and also the elements of religion. The priests of India do not preach; they look after the ceremonial side of the religion. For religious teaching the people look first to their mothers, and later to various kinds of *sâdhus* or holy men. Here is a typical story:

> Once upon a time there lived a king named Yudhishthira. After a long and virtuous life, when he had grown old, he was travelling alone with only a dog which had followed him, and the time came for him to die. Then there appeared a great angel, coming down from the sky in a beautiful chariot, all fire and gold.
>
> And the angel said, "Come with me, great king, to the heavenly regions, where you deserve to live for thousands of years because of your goodness."
>
> But the king said, "I cannot come yet. Thi dog is dependent upon me, and I cannot leave him to perish miserably."
>
> Then the dog was suddenly changed into

another angel, for this dog was but an illusion sent as a test of the king's heart.

So they went up to heaven, and the angel said, "Enjoy now, O king, all this happiness which you have deserved."

The king looked at all the beautiful palaces and gardens, dear to the hearts of kings and people, and then he said, "But, O angel, my happiness is not yet complete, for I must have the company of those whom I love. Where are my four brothers, who died before me?"

"They have gone to the place which they deserve," said the angel. "Why do you not enjoy the happiness that is yours?"

But the king insisted on seeing his brothers, so the angel led him away until presently they came into gloomy and terrible caverns where there was to be seen only darkness and flames, but sounds of people crying and moaning could be heard.

They came to a halt, and the angel said, "These are the voices of your brothers, who are suffering for their misdeeds, and now come back to your own place."

"No," said Yudhishthira, "I will stay. I shall try to find some means to assist my brothers, or at least to comfort them with my presence."

Then again there was a great transformation.

> The darkness, the flames, and the awful sounds were gone, and the king found himself in a heaven even more beautiful than that to which the angel had first led him, along with his brothers. All the misery had once more been an illusion and a final test!

This is the sort of religious teaching Hindu children receive from their mothers when they are very little. It is given to them through hundreds of traditional stories which they hear in this way. There is a much real culture in home education of this kind, quite apart from reading and writing.

India is famous for stories. As to one large collection, the *Panchatantra*, Prof. A. A. Macdonell writes: "During many centuries the Panchatantra enriched...the literatures of three continents, and exercised an extraordinary influence on the narrative works of the whole Middle Ages......Probably no book except the Bible has been translated into so many languages, certainly no secular book. It has truly been said regarding this narrative literature that 'the story of the migration of Indian fairy tales from East to West is more wonderful and instructive than many of those fairy tales themselves.' "*

***India's Past*, pp. 122-3.

In homes where many people are living on the joint family system there is inevitably much casual education. The people do not live in separate rooms, as in apartment houses in New York or London. The whole house is thrown open and the children move and play about where they will. They see what is going on in the kitchen; they know how the household is managed; they hear the conversation of their elders, and thus pick up a great quantity of information which is practically related to their own life. And through it all there runs the gentleness and culture of an old civilization.

It happens, too, that though but few people can read in a village, those who do read, read aloud and many others listen, and there is much discussion on the topics raised. Or when some wandering *sâdhu* stays overnight in the village, many people cluster round to hear what he has to say.

We buy our paper and sit by ourselves. They discuss; and the result is that very often they obtain a better and broader view of any topical subject from that discussion than we do from reading one side of the question in our favorite paper. It is the habit of Hindus not to jump to conclusions, but when

they hear a lecture or conversation of interest, quietly to think it over afterwards. Much of their life consists of such meditations. The Hindu mind thus becomes exceedingly mature, even where there is little literacy.

CHAPTER XV

GIRLS' EDUCATION

When I bring to you coloured toys, my child, I understand why there is such a play of colours on clouds, on water, and why flowers are painted in tints—when I give coloured toys to you, my child.

When I sing to make you dance I truly know why there is music in leaves, and why waves send their chorus of voices to the heart of the listening earth—when I sing to make you dance.

When I bring sweet things to your greedy hands I know why there is honey in the cup of the flower and why fruits are secretly filled with sweet juice—when I bring sweet things to your greedy hands.

When I kiss your face to make you smile, my darling, I surely understand what the pleasure is that streams from the sky in morning light, and what delight that is which the summer breeze brings to my body—when I kiss you to make you smile.

Tagore

WE come now to the education, or rather lack of education, of girls in British India. Miss Mayo gives us the figures relating to literacy. " Less than 2 per cent. of the women of British India are literate in the sense of being able to write a letter of a few simple phrases, and read its answer, in any one language or dialect. To be exact, such literates numbered, in 1921, eighteen to the thousand. But in the year 1911 they numbered ten to the thousand."*

She goes on to tell us that a century ago literate women were practically unknown in India and that the bulk of the people are and always were opposed to female education on religio-social grounds. She then indulges in some unfruitful circling in support of these two contentions, quoting first people of one opinion and then people of another opinion, beginning with the Abbé Dubois. His remarks are, as usual, absurd, such as that " women are considered incapable of developing any of those higher mental qualities which make them more worthy of consideration and also more capable of playing a useful part in life," and that " it would be thought a disgrace to a respectable woman to learn to read, and even

***Mother India*, p. 123.**

if she had learned she would be ashamed to own it." Miss Mayo tells us that though the people even of the higher classes are against women's education, "among Western-educated Indians in the higher walks of life, the desire for similarly educated wives sometimes rises even to a willingness to accept such brides with dowries smaller than would otherwise be exacted."

For evidence as to the essential defectiveness of the opinion quoted, let us look at some of the Indian States. We find that in the year 1909, the State of Baroda had 47·6 per cent. of girls at school, against the 4 per cent. achievement of British India. The Gaekwar was spending 13 cents a head on this education, while in British India we were spending only 2 cents a head. In British India it is not a question of prejudice against education, but of lack of funds. As I explained in the last chapter, most people have no money left to pay for girls' education when they have provided for the boys, the bread-winners of the family. Indeed, many of them cannot even provide for the boys.

It is not only Baroda which has a good record. I see that the State of Travancore spends more than 22 per cent. of its total









Girl Guides Signalling

Page 261.

revenue on education, and has over 33 per cent. of its girls at school. I have not at hand the figures for other States, but I know that some of them are doing very much better than British India in this respect.

Objections as to the form and conditions of modern education were raised by some who gave testimony before the Calcutta University Commission in 1917. They spoke to the effect that Hindu females should not be allowed to come under influences outside the family, that there was at present no system of school or college education suited to their requirements, that the girls obtained better moral and practical training in the homes than in the kind of schools now available, and that there was danger that they might acquire desires which would cause discontent and discord later on. Other quotations, mainly from members of Legislatures, express opinions contrary to these.

As regards education in the home, there is in the north a very great number of Hindu ladies who learn the Hindi language from pandits who visit the houses. They read Tulsi Das' *Râmâyana*, or even when they cannot read it hear it read by others. That book is a very liberal education in morals and

the humanities, and compares favorably with the Latin and Greek classics. At the same time the girls are obtaining considerable knowledge relating to home life. This is not as effectual as it used to be, partly because the conditions of modern life have often broken up the old joint family homes, and partly because it has become more and more the custom to call in help from outside in connection with family affairs. This is, of course, a custom which has been growing also in other countries. But here is a picture of that home life given by Dr. Annie Besant!

> Many of my friends of forty or fifty years of age have told me about their grandmothers, how the elder woman used to tell them stories and recite hundreds of *shlokas* which they had learnt; how they ruled over great houses; how sometimes in the joint family system there would be a hundred or a couple of hundred persons all under the rule of the oldest woman of the family; how she was able to provide for all their needs; how she was able to see to the details of her great family; how also she had no need to send for a doctor when a babe was a little hurt or was a little ill, but used to seek in her own medicine chest.*

* *Wake Up; India*, p. 217.

Mr. William Archer shows how far from practicality much of the teaching is in present-day schools. This is a defect which is rapidly being remedied, yet there still exists much of the sort of teaching described as follows:

> Let me give you one or two instances of what I mean by Anglo-literary education. I once visited a High School for Girls, very well conducted by an English headmistress. The physical drill and teaching of the household occupations seemed to me excellent; it was in the classroom devoted to geography and history that my doubts were aroused by two maps displayed on the walls, and pointed out, with no little pride, as the work of the girls themselves. One was a map of England, in which the principal products of the chief towns were shown by means of objects attached at the appropriate spots. Thus a toy motor-car indicated Coventry, a ship, Liverpool, a knife, Sheffield, a scrap of woollen cloth, Bradford, and so forth. In this there was no harm, if one had felt sure that the local products of India had been illustrated with similar care; but one or two maps of India, exhibited at the same time, showed no such elaboration of detail.
>
> The second map to which my attention was called belonged to the historical department.

> The reader would scarcely guess its subject, if he were to think for a year of the unlikeliest theme to propose to a class of Indian girls. It was a plan of the battlefield of Agincourt; showing the position of the contending forces! The details of the battle of Agincourt may be of great interest from a strategic point of view; or from the point of view of a somewhat narrow British patriotism; but what have Indian girls to do with either strategy or the quarrels of the Plantagenets?*

India is sufficiently old-fashioned to desire that the women shall be educated in a way that will not destroy their instinct for motherhood and home-life, so that the country may not fall into the condition which is overtaking Britain to-day. It appears that there are in Britain 1,500,000 married couples without children; of these only one half are said to be deliberately childless. This means that (1) the maternal instinct is being weakened, and (2) something is wrong with the race. In 2,500,000 homes there is only one child in each, and the birth-rate has fallen until it is about the lowest in Europe.

Not only in England, but in other parts of the civilized world the same sort of thing

*India and the Future, p. 267.

is taking place. I have the figures for the clergymen of New South Wales. In the time of Oliver Goldsmith a country parson in England with many children was passing rich on £ 40 a year. These clergymen are receiving in all an average income of nearly £400 a year, and yet they seem to be so poor that the average rectory has less than two children, which means of course a reduction in their numbers generation by generation. Evidently they have to choose between restricting the family or facing some financial strain and sacrifice of personal pleasures or comfort.

Babu Bhagavan Das tells us what the Hindu idea is. He says that Manu's ideal is gentle men and gentle women, each filling a distinct place in the domestic and the social scheme, not entering into conflict with each other, but supplementing the qualities of each other, and making life's way smoother for each other, and that this may be, he suggests somewhat different kinds of training for the two. He adds, however, that among his people it is believed that the human soul has no sex, but incarnates now in one sex and now in the other, so, in the thought of the great law-giver, Manu, there could not possibly be the idea of any inherent superiority or inferiority of either to the other.

This Hindu author points out also that our race movement in general is at present turning in the direction of more womanliness. We have been too hard, and are now admitting more and more kindness into our life outside the family. This end will not be gained by giving a great number of girls exactly the same education as we now give to boys, but by providing a higher education and University course especially for women, suited to their household life and to the contribution to public affairs which is characteristically theirs. Wherever women are coming into public life they are bringing in their own way of looking at all questions, and I think it is necessary that we should have Universities for women, organized by women and managed by women as far as possible. When this comes about in India, we may be quite sure that higher education will be taken up with avidity. Then the two reforms of advancement in the age of marriage and increase of education will go on very well, side by side, and will react favourably upon each other.

Although Miss Mayo several times makes the statement that it is the women themselves who are keeping education back, the reverse is indicated by the large conferences which have

recently been taking place. These show the same point of view as that expressed by Babu Bhagavan Das. In an article by Shrimati Malati Patwardhan appearing in New India,* she tells us that the ladies held constituent conferences in every province in India, from which elected members were sent to Poona, where an all-India Women's Conference on educational reform was held in January 1927 under the Presidentship of H. H. the Maharani of Baroda. At the opening there were about 2,500 present. The women gathered from twenty-two constituent conferences, and came together, without feeling any barriers of caste or class, community or religion. They passed resolutions on moral, manual and physical training, instructions for motherhood, sex hygiene and home-life, teachers' salaries, education for defectives, etc.

During the year further conferences followed, many more constituencies were formed, and in Feb. 1928 another big all-India conference took place in Delhi. This expressed its disapproval of educational systems for women imitating those provided for men, but advised stress upon education related to women's home and social life,

*Dec. 15, 1927.

and for careers along the lines of the fine arts, social science, advanced domestic science, journalism and architecture.

Another sign of progress is that some people are sending their girls to school between the betrothal marriage ceremony and the consummation marriage ceremony.

Miss Mayo gives us some figures as to the number of girls' schools in British India in 1921-2, derived from the Government publication *Progress of Education in India.* There were 23,778 girls' schools, inclusive of all grades. These contained apart from pupils in the primary stages only 24,555 girls in the Middle Schools and 5,818 in the High Schools, a total a little over 30,000. Less than 1,000 were reading in the arts and professional colleges. There were, in all, 1,377,021 girls at school and college, as against 6,829,204 boys.

Miss Mayo quotes from the same document the opinion that "It would be perfectly easy to multiply schools in which little girls would amuse themselves in preparatory classes, and from which they would drift away gradually during the lower primary stage. The statistical result would be impressive, but the educational effect would be *nil* and public money would be indefensibly wasted." It is

possible to overdo this argument, as it is important to make a beginning with all the girls. If the school curriculum is well thought out, in four years the little girls should be able to read and write. If that prepared the way for a consumption of popular household magazines on the lines let us say of *The Ladies Home Journal* in America, we should certainly have laid the foundation of women's education deep and broad and strong. These economic factors always react upon one another. A really good popular women's monthly paper in Hindi would advance education by leaps and bounds, by creating a desire to read. At present it would have to face the difficulty of a very small circulation.

One of the difficulties relating to women's education is that there are twelve languages in the country. Miss Mayo says that there are 222 vernaculars spoken in India, with no common tongue.* This is going into detail too much and is taking in what in England we should call dialects. In Britain we had an even greater problem relative to the area a few decades ago. Then there were the complications of the Scotch, the Welsh, and the Irish to take into account. Even to-day many

* *Mother India*, p. 192.

people from Lancashire can hardly understand the people of Devonshire. When I was in Wales recently I met some people who could scarcely speak a word of English; many of the people there still use the old Welsh language as their home vernacular, so that for them English is a second language.

In India, Mr. Gandhi and many other reformers have been aiming at introducing the Hindi language to all the people. It can be done. It is not really difficult, and there would be great enthusiasm for it did India obtain Home Rule. The twelve languages of India are more or less closely related. Thus, for example, the Tamil language of the extreme south has about seventy-five per cent. of its words derived from Sanskrit. Hindi is easily learned and as a second language in the primary schools all over India would soon provide the common tongue which is now lacking. It is already spoken by nearly a hundred million people. Bengali comes next, with fifty millions. Telugu is third with twenty-three millions.

Miss Mayo quotes from a gentleman who gave evidence before the Calcutta University Commission and said: "People naturally prefer to educate their boys, well knowing

that in future they will make them happy and comfortable in their old age, and glorify their family, whilst the girls, after marriage, will be at the mercy of others." She has nothing to say about the average father's lack of money to pay for his daughter's education, but she does bring in a question of other costs, about which much is talked in English circles. She says that the father "can rarely marry her without paying a dowry so large that it strains his resources: to which must be added the cost of the wedding—costs so excessive that, as a rule, they plunge him deep into debt. This heavy tax he commonly incurs before his daughter reaches her teens. Why, then, should he spend still more money on her, to educate her; or why, if he be poor and can use her labor, should he go without her help and send her to school, since she is so early to pass for ever into another man's service?"*

There are many cases in which men incur debts in this connection, but I am sure not to anything like the extent that is often suggested. And, then, when there are joint families, what is lost in one way is returned in another, for what a family pays away with the daughters comes back to the sons. I think

Mother India, p. 131.

we need not exaggerate the importance of the question of dowry in its bearing upon the advancement of girls' education. At all events it does not seem to have prevented progress in the States of Baroda and Travancore.

Miss Mayo talks of the desperately uphill attempt to bestow literacy upon Indian women which is being made mainly by the British Government and the missionaries, and she assumes that unless there is "a radical change in performance on the part of the Indians themselves, ninety-five more years of such combined effort will be required to wrest from hostility and inertia the privilege of primary education for as much as 12 per cent. of the female population."*

A radical change has evidently taken place, for the statistical abstract presented before Parliament in March 1928 showed an increase in five years of about 30 per cent. of children at school. At this rate nearly 100 per cent. will be at school comparatively soon.

Miss Mayo raises the question of the school ma'am, and seems to think it economically impossible to develop an extensive village school system without a great number of women teachers. She reminds us that India is

*_Ibid_, p. 129.

90 per cent. rural, and adds: "To give primary education to one-eighth of the human race, scattered over an area of 1,094,300 square miles, in five hundred thousand little villages, obviously demands an army of teachers. Now, consider the problem of recruiting that army when no native women are available for the job. For the village school ma'am, in India of to-day, does not and cannot exist."*

It certainly is not practical to develop the American system, which provides enormous numbers of women teachers, while India holds to her present family ideas. There is the possibility that many widows and some others may take up this work, but it is more likely to devolve upon the men, and these ought to be married men receiving a salary sufficient to maintain a home in the village. As I think I have said before, when it is provided the men will come. That there is no lack of material is shown by a statement made in the papers two years ago that hundreds of University Graduates applied for a post of railway ticket-collector.

* *Ibid*, p. 201.

CHAPTER XVI

SANITATION

> Away with those that preach to us the washing off of sin;
> Thine own self is the stream for thee to make ablutions in.
> In self-restraint it rises pure, flows clear in tide of truth,
> By widening banks of wisdom, in waves of peace and ruth.
> Bathe there, thou son of Pandu! with reverence and rite,
> For never yet was water wet could wash the spirit white.
>
> *Hitopadesa*

IN two chapters of "Mother India" Miss Mayo discusses sanitary conditions in India. First she invites us to look behind the scenes, or rather beneath the surface, in the great city of pilgrimage, Benares. She declares that though it presents a beautiful and picturesque scene, its land and water must be saturated

with filth, and it must therefore be a centre of infection and a menace not only to India but to the whole world.

If the sanitary conditions along the river side were as bad as Miss Mayo asserts, Benares would long ago have become such a diseased spot as to have been wiped off the map by its own corruption. On general grounds they could not be so.

The line of the river is fairly straight along the three-mile frontage of Benares. The bank retreats rapidly, not gradually, into the depths, from the very steps of the *ghats* and the vast volume of water that sweeps along generally insures its constant renewal even to the very edge. The water is clear, so that a coin lying on the bottom can be seen.

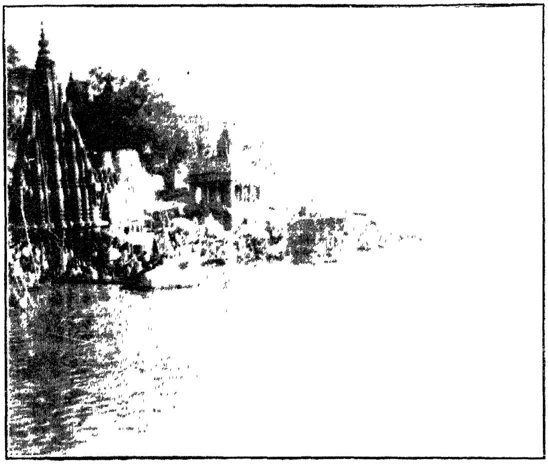
When in flood once a year with the melting of the Himalayan snows, the Ganges is a river of immense volume and force. It has not only from time to time undermined the walls and caused portions of the steps to sink, but has actually effected the downfall and the slipping of huge buildings. The enormous pillars of some old palaces can be seen leaning inwards at an angle of some thirty degrees, having slipped down the side owing to the force of the water. This effect of the river

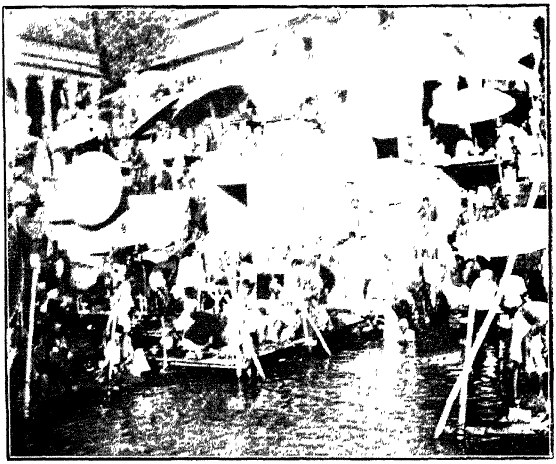
itself is not mentioned by Miss Mayo. I am sure that the cracks in the Ganges' wall shown in her photograph facing page 371 of "Mother India" are not due to the seepage of sewage, as she claims, but chiefly to the force of the river itself.

She asserts: "The river banks are dried sewage. The river water is liquid sewage. The faithful millions drink and bathe in the one, and spread out their clothes to dry upon the other."* Such statements are quite unwarranted. The old drains of the city of which Miss Mayo speaks were, of course, for the drainage of water, not of sewage, though she fails to mention the fact. Sewage was always carried out of the city.

Bacteriological analysis has proved that the old Hindu tradition that the water of the Ganges is antiseptic is well founded. In an article entitled *L'Action Bactéricide des Eaux de la Jumna et du Gange sur le Microbe du Choléra*, M. E. Hankin of the Laboratory of the Government at Agra, after observing that there are no ill-consequences connected with bathing in the Ganges, and that epidemics always travel *up* the river, not down it, writes:

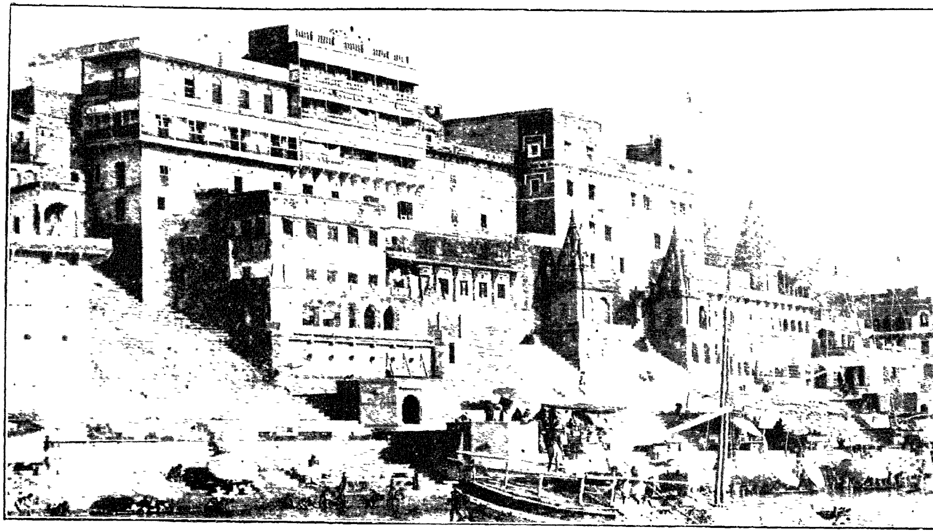
* *Mother India*, p. 359.





Bathing at Benares.

Page 276.



Page 277.

Steps at Benares.

Ewing Galloway, N. Y.

It appeared to me that the above facts pointed perhaps to this—that the water of the Jumna and the Ganges cannot support the life of the cholera microbe, on account of the lack of nutritive matters. The following experiments, made in order to verify that hypothesis, have led me to discover that these waters contain an antiseptic exerting a powerful bactericidal action upon the cholera microbe.*

After reciting the conclusions of various experiments, the writer adds:

One sees that unboiled Ganges water kills the cholera microbe in less than three hours. The same water boiled has not the same effect. The water of wells is, on the contrary, a good environment for this microbe, even though it be boiled or filtered.†

Speaking of the River Jumna, he says:

I have inserted cholera microbes into non-sterilised water of the Jumna, and I have found, by the ordinary method of peptone cultures, that they died in less than four hours.‡

Further on the doctor explains that the

**Annales de L'Institut Pasteur* (Journal de Microbologie), Paris. Tome Dixieme, 1896, p. 514. Translation mine.

†*Annales de L'Institut Pasteur* (Journal de Microbologie), Paris, tome dixieme, 1896, p. 515.

‡*Ibid*, p. 516.

results show that there is no objection to the custom of throwing corpses, whether partly burnt or not, into the river. After giving an account of the way in which turtles and other creatures dispose of the remains, and of his own experiments with water drawn from the immediate vicinity of such a body, he says:

> It appears then that all the impurities produced by a large town, and even also the practice of throwing half-burnt corpses into the river, are without influence upon the power which the water of the Jumna possesses of destroying the cholera microbe.*

He concludes his article with the suggestion:

> These facts suggest that in the Hindu pilgrimages to the sacred places of the rivers of the Ganges and the Jumna, it would be advantageous to disadvise the use of well water, and to encourage the use of the river water. That will undoubtedly be easy, as the pilgrims regard that water as both holy and stimulating to the digestion.†

This is not the place to consider why this antiseptic action should be so evident, but

* *Ibid*, p. 522.
† *Ibid*, p. 523.

I may mention in passing that Dr. F. D'Herelle considers it probably due to what he calls the bacteriophage.*

Those who take Ganges water to their distant homes cherish it carefully and deal it out drop by drop like liquid gold. One Hindu friend assured me that the pot of Ganges water in his house was twelve years old, and the water was still good. An Indian doctor told me that it had some medicinal properties on account of some small amount of sulphur or mercury which it contained, but it was chiefly useful for bathing, while the water of the Jumna was better for drinking, in accordance with the old proverb: "*Ganga snan* and *Jamna pan,*" that is "Ganges to bathe and Jamna to drink."

There is generally thoughtless criticism with reference to such matters. I once, travelling as a Hindu and dressed as one, attended one of the great twelve-year festivals called *pushkaram*, at Bezwada near the East Coast. It was estimated that two million persons were there. We all went down to the river Krishna to bathe at once. It was an experience not to be forgotten, to be in the

**The Bacteriophage and its Behaviour*, F. D'Herelle, M. D., 1926, p. 7.

midst of that enormous mass of people all intent upon one object.

At that time a certain rich man of the town, whose name I have forgotten, issued a notice to the effect that he would give new cloths and food to any among those two million who were suffering physically. I went to his garden at the time appointed for this. I saw there about two hundred people, some of them suffering from the most extraordinary, unheard of, unthought of, troubles. It was a terrible sight. I will not describe the enormities and deformities that I saw. But the other side of the picture is that these were only about two hundred people, out of about two million who went down to bathe or had come to the city in connection with the festival.

As far as I am aware no ill results came to anybody from their bathing and sipping that river water on that occasion. The white man does not know everything about these matters. There are surely psychological considerations also to be taken into account. I am not suggesting easy credulity with respect to these things, but I am suggesting that there is danger of great narrowness and bigotry in reference to medical and sanitary matters generally.

We are not without disease in Europe.

In Britain deaths from cancer have increased from 247 per million in 1850 to 1,362 per million in 1926. It is beginning to be realized that cancer propagates itself somehow from one who has it to other persons living in the same house. When we are talking of centres of infection, let us not forget London and Chicago while we are criticizing Bombay and Benares. We have much to learn both in the East and in the West. Let us learn these things together, without mutual recrimination and half-ignorant criticism.

Benares is only one, though the chief, of the seven sacred places of India to which many of the orthodox Hindus try to make a pilgrimage before they die. The wise men of old India arranged for these sacred places of pilgrimage to be far apart. There is Rameshwaram in the extreme south where one crosses over to Ceylon, and Hardwar in the north, where the Ganges emerges from the mountains. There is Puri in the east, on the Bay of Bengal, not far south of Calcutta, and Dwarka at the extreme west, in the peninsula of Kathiawar. It was perhaps part of the old scheme to cause people to make journeys, largely on foot, to these places, because such a walking tour is conducive to health and also to education.

The conveniences of modern travel have caused these centres of pilgrimage to become more congested, while the benefits of the travel have largely disappeared.

Miss Mayo also takes up the question of burning the dead. Many people consider in these days that we have to learn a valuable sanitary lesson from India, from their practice of burning instead of burying dead bodies. It can be argued that it is not sanitary to have millions of dead bodies rotting in the ground near to our great cities. We used to bury people in the churchyard in the very heart of the city, but now we have got away from that. Crematoria are springing up, so possibly we shall all follow the Hindu custom of burning in course of time.

In India I have seen some of the disadvantages of burial among the Muhammadans who are poor. About a furlong from a place where I used frequently to stay just outside a country town nearly two hundred miles from Madras City, there was a small graveyard. Whenever there had been a burial, I was much disturbed at nights afterwards by the yowling of the jackals in that cemetery. These creatures make a noise which has to be heard to be believed.

At Benares the burning *ghats* or steps occupy a small section in the middle of the water-front. There is a criticism that the process is often incomplete. Miss Mayo paid only one visit, but she happened to see in that one visit what I have not seen in a great many, that is, some dogs "nosing among the ashes."* When in Benares I used to go frequently for walks along the whole length of the *ghats* with an old white-bearded friend, now dead, Mr. K. Narayanaswami Aiyar, a former *vakil* or lawyer of South India, who had given himself up to the religious life and spent his time preaching over the length and breadth of India. We often stood for a long time at the burning *ghat* and watched the process. He used facetiously to remark that he wanted to become used to it before his turn came. I have seen this matter of burning bodies in other places as well. In all the cases seen by me there was plenty of wood underneath and also on top of the body and the burning seemed effective, though some bones and ashes would, of course, remain. At Benares these remains are thrown into the river, but they soon disappear.

Miss Mayo takes us next to the old bazaar portion of the city of Lahore, which is one of

***Mother India*, p. 359.

the sights of India. Its crowded, busy, narrow streets, belonging to the days when towns were built tortuously to puzzle and hamper a possible invader, are very picturesque. Such places as these constitute a very small fragment of India; in fact this old bazaar section is but a small part of Lahore. Most of the cities in India, especially those of the South, have fairly wide streets, sometimes very wide streets.

The point of special interest at the present juncture may be quoted in full. After the description of the little shops which have their floors some three feet above the level of the street and have little projecting platforms and steps leading down to the street, the account continues:

> Close under these platforms on both sides of the road, runs an open gutter about a foot wide. The gutter is in steady and open use as a public latrine. Heaped on the slats of the wooden platforms, just escaping the gutter, are messes of fried fish, rice cakes, cooked curry, sticky sweetmeats, and other foods for sale. All the food-heaps lie practically underfoot, exposed to every sort of accident, while flies, dirty hands, the nosing of dogs, cows, bulls and sheep, and scurrying rats constantly add their contributions; as do the babies and children with sore

eyes and skin diseases, pawing and rolling in the midst of it all, enveloped in clouds of dust and of acrid smoke.

And you must be careful, in walking, not to brush against the wall of a house. For the latrines of the upper stories and of the roofs drain down the outside of the houses either in leaking pipes or else from small vent-holes in the walls dripping and stringing into the gutter slow streams that just clear the fried fish and the lollypops.*

Yes, the gutters are there, and if one walks round for a few hours one may be able to find some boy or man using them as a public latrine. I should not call that "steady and open use." I am sure that the police would have something to say to anyone caught in this practice. I know that in the city of Madras there are very strict regulations as to such things, and the police are very vigilant in the matter. As to this I could tell a story, from personal knowledge, of a very respectable and well-to-do Hindu gentleman who was one night walking through a comparatively, unfrequented part of the city and suddenly found himself in great need of relief. He did not escape the vigilance of the police. A constable

*_Ibid_, p. 362.

appeared from somewhere and promptly arrested him. I do not know whether this gentleman tried bribery, which he could well afford, but if he did it was of no avail.

I have noticed that in one of the cities of South India there was more laxity; and in some of the streets there some people do go out in the early mornings and make use of the gutters. Though they form a very small percentage of the population, that practice has a very unpleasant effect.

Let us consider some other points in the above description of the old bazaar in Lahore. The wooden platforms are far above the gutters; the food in the trays and plates, so far from being underfoot, is about the height of a man's waist; no dogs are allowed up the steps in the shops; people do not handle the foods in the trays or plates; babies with sore eyes and skin diseases are not rolling in the food. There may be a few babies about the streets, but not rolling, as there is no sidewalk, and they would be run over. There is much dirt and there are many flies, and there are shaped channels to carry water down the sides of the older houses, instead of pipes, but those channels are not from the privys in the houses, but from the bathrooms.

Miss Mayo recognises with satisfaction that there are some societies of Indians working for the promotion of sanitation. There are many. Mr. Gandhi is one of these workers for sanitary progress—so much so that Miss Mayo frequently quotes him, as she does on the present occasion. He is very outspoken against the insanitary habits of some of his people, and gives full credit to the officials who are doing what they can to improve matters. Miss Mayo says: "As Mr. Gandhi has shown, Hindus anywhere, dispense with latrines." This is certainly unfair. Mr. Gandhi was trying to correct the people who do that. He never said what is here implied. They do sometimes use roads and gutters, but not, as Miss Mayo asserts, their own floors.

In certain public places latrines have been put up, but in my experience they are not cleaned with sufficient frequency, so that many people do not like to go inside. They prefer if possible some place where the sun shines, for they know that if, according to their old system, the solid is kept separate from the liquid, and the sun is shining, there will be no smell or putrefaction. Further, the Hindu likes to say certain prayers at these times.

He finds it altogether unpleasant in a confined and airless place where several people have been before him, and the cleansing, instead of being continuous, is only occasional. Latrines ought to be arranged not with a pan in which a quantity of liquid and solid matter accumulates together, but on some plan conformable to the old Hindu ideas of sanitation.

The chief difficulties in these respects are in towns, which are generally not rich enough to instal the best systems on a large scale. In the villages the old Indian rule was that all the people were to go a long way from the dwellings to relieve themselves. That system is now somewhat out of date, but I found that the practice most approved by the people themselves was what is sometimes called the dry earth system. They plan the privy in such a manner that the liquid drains off from the solid, and then the solid is covered with dry earth. They seem to have known long ago that sewage becomes most objectionable when the liquid and solid remain together. They also provide no roofs to the privies, so that the blazing sunshine may enter and do its share of the work of purification, which is great indeed. In these matters, certainly, India is not up to date, but is not so impossibly

bad as is sometimes suggested. The septic tank system is very suitable for India, and is gradually being adopted here and there among those who can afford it. Even in Europe sanitary disposal of sewage is very modern, so we may hope that India is only a little behind in this respect.

In the matter of personal cleanliness there is no one to equal the better classes in India, except perhaps the Japanese. In England we learned our system of the daily bath through contact with India. Even now the bulk of the middle and lower classes in Europe take a bath only once a week. Several of our habits, such as that of wearing unwashed clothes for weeks and months together, and that of not washing hands and teeth before and after all meals, are repugnant to the Hindus.

Many of our European friends are constantly trying to persuade Indians to wear more clothing, because they have a foreign idea that it is somehow immoral to see the human skin. Personally I think the human skin is beautiful, and I think that for a coolie a simple loin cloth is quite sufficient, and for a Hindu gentleman of the south in hot weather a simple pair of cloths such as are worn by pandits and

old-fashioned people. Even shirts are unnecessary in this season, and coats buttoning to the neck, such as advocates and teachers are required to wear, are positively painful to see.

One of the most objectionable things in my experience was the way in which the officials of the Educational Department in South India insisted, on penalty of expulsion from school, that every student should wear on the upper part of his body in addition to the usual shirt, a tailored coat and a pork-pie cap, while sitting in school all day long. I fought against this for a long time without much effect. It was in my eyes a dirty and dangerous custom, because these coats were not washed every day like the rest of the clothing, and the caps were never washed at all. It was also uncomfortable, hot and exceedingly unhealthy. Whenever I protested to any of the European officers, their only reply was that to abandon the coats and caps would bring in a spirit of disrespect among the pupils. Some also told me how unpleasant it would be to see the different modes of hair-dressing, to which they were unwilling to become accustomed.

I have mentioned the old rule of sanitation laid down by Manu, and still followed by many

people, that the villagers must go a considerable distance from the dwellings for their morning convenience. The following were some others of the rules of Manu:

> Side by side with personal cleanliness, the daily disinfection and purification of the whole house was secured by the performance of the daily *homa* (fire offering) with various odorous and medicinal substances, and the daily *sandhyâ* (meditation) and worship in the family temple-room with flowers and incense, in every household...
>
> To secure free circulation of light and air, to subserve the purposes of a natural system of conservancy, also to provide tooth-brushes and fuel for the people and pasturage for the indispensable domestic cattle, Manu ordains that certain areas of grass-lands and brush-wood and small jungle shall be left open around habitations, the areas to be fixed by proportion to the population.
>
> The necessity of not allowing any refuse-matter in the vicinity of dwelling-houses is especially insisted on, and the observance of the rule is made possible by the provision of these large open areas, on which the forces of the great natural purifiers, sun and air, and also certain appropriate species of the vegetable

and animal kingdoms, nature's scavengers, can act unhindered.*

The Indian gentleman who writes this book thinks that sooner or later we shall have to reconstruct our Western cities so as to provide more light and air. He says:

> The growth of huge cities, immensely overcrowded with men and machinery, and of complex and artificial ways of living, makes these simple rules inapplicable to the present.
>
> Elaborate systems of drains for removing sewage-matter to a distance are resorted to, and many devices invented from time to time for artificial lighting and airing and getting rid of the smoke and the soot and the general dirt. But they are seldom really satisfactory. And it is coming to be recognized more and more generally even in the West that the only solution is a dispersal of this crowding, and a change in the ways of living.†

In the city of Manchester, in England, when I was a boy, some trees were kept in large tubs in the main square, in front of the Town Hall. These were carted out into the country about once a week and others brought to replace them, for otherwise they would have languished

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***The Science of Social Organization*, p. 233.
†*Ibid*, p. 234.

and died, on account of the bad air, which contained much sulphur from burning coal. This, and much carbon dust, also enter the lungs of the people and must have a bad effect.

In New York streets to-day, loose garbage out of ash-cans is tipped directly into great open trucks. Even a little wind blows much of this about into the faces and upon the clothes of passers-by, and through open windows into the houses. They do this better in Sydney, Australia, where householders are required to roll their refuse into newspaper parcels. We are at least saved some of these things in the Indian village.

I will add some remarks about cleanliness from the Hindu point of view, and explain how it was taught to the pupil in the old system of education, which has been supplanted by our modern Western schools. In the curriculum cleanliness, chastity, good manners and high aspirations were the first subjects. These included how to eat, drink, bathe, sleep and keep the body and the dwelling-place clean. Cleanliness went beyond the outside of the body and was applied to the inside. Breathing exercises were prescribed to purify the body, concentration to purify the mind, mental abstraction to overcome the sense appetites,

and meditation to obtain higher thoughts. The evening meditation was to purify the mind from stains and worries and bad thoughts of the day; the morning meditation was to clear away the faults of the night and to prepare the heart and mind for the duties and associations of the coming day.

In the old system, the second consideration was intellectual education. But cleanliness came first, in body, act, word, and thought. In popular talk the same principles appeared, and still do so, for example in the proverb, "The foot should be placed on a clean spot; water should be drunk after being strained; a word should be spoken with truth, and business should be done with consideration."

Turning to the question of water-supply, Miss Mayo tells us that the village "tank" was produced in the following way: the mud or rather clay required for building the houses of the village was taken from one spot; the hole thus left filled with water at the first rains and became the village tank. This assumes that the village was built *all at once*, which is not usually the case.

> Thenceforward forever, the village has bathed in its tank, washed its clothes in its tank, washed its pots and pans in its tank, watered

its cattle in its tank, drawn its cooking water from its tank, served the calls of nature by its tank and with the contents of its tank has quenched its thirst.*

Nearly every one of these statements is exaggerated in a misleading manner. Almost every village is well supplied with a number of wells from which most of the water is taken for drinking, bathing, and washing clothes and cooking pots. Most villagers go to a distance from the village to answer the calls of nature, in accordance with the instructions given in their old books. Omitting the last three items it may be said that the other things are done to a very limited extent.

The tank is responsible for mosquitoes in many places, but not where there are sufficient snails, frogs, fishes and plants of certain kinds. In connection with the subject of mosquitoes breeding in these tanks, we have the following enlightening conversation with respect to Bengali babies lying in the grass :

"Why do you mothers plant your babies there to be eaten alive ?"

"Because if we protect our babies the gods will be jealous and bring us all bad luck."†

**Mother India*, p. 366.
†*Ibid*, p. 367.

Notice the language used by the questioner here. First the term "plant." Bengali mothers do not plant their babies anywhere. They may sometimes put them on the grass while they go down to the water. Next the expression "to be eaten alive". Mosquitoes do not eat anybody, dead or alive. They make a hole, put down a tube, and drink a little blood. Even this is not the real danger from mosquitoes; that comes from the diseases which they transmit. I have no doubt that the inaccuracy involved in this statement, which is characteristic of the entire book, is also reflected into the answer put into the mouth of the Bengali mother. This is what my Hindu friends would call a *râjasic** book, full of *râjasic* words.

This leads on to a discussion of malaria, which is one of the big troubles in many parts of India. It ends with the usual assertion: "Under present conditions of Indianized control, governmental anti-malarial work, like all other preventive sanitation, is badly crippled. Yet it generally contrives to hold its own, though denied the sinews of progress."

The village wells of India vary much in

*Passionate.

depth, commonly from twenty to forty feet. There is generally a wall two and a half or three feet high built round the well, and then a pavement round that. People bathe on the pavement and also wash their teeth at its outer edge. It is true that the same water may go back into the well, but generally in order to do so, it must sink to the depth of the brick wall outside the well. I do not think that this fact warrants the statement that "the water they use splashes back over their feet into the pit whence they drew it."

Good wells are constantly increasing in India and hand pumps are coming into use in some places. Machinery such as the hand pump tends to fall into disrepair for want of spare parts and because most people know very little about it. This difficulty will pass away with the development of Indian industries, which will involve the training of many people in practical mechanics.

One chapter of "Mother India" closes with a statement about the way in which the water system in Madras was polluted. It illustrates the eagerness with which Miss Mayo collected illustrations of the worst that she could find, and gave full and instant credence to any statements or opinions of an

unpleasant kind, and her method of taking unique occurrences and citing them with the expression "for example." Consider the following:

> The City of Madras, for example, the third largest city in the land, completed its present water system in 1914. The catchment area, in the hills, includes several villages. The water, as it reaches the city plant, is about as foul as water can be. By the design of the system it is here passed through slow sand-filters into a pure-water tank at the rate of 10,000,000 gallons a day.
>
> But the population of Madras has increased and the capacity of the plant is now 4,000,000 gallons short of the daily needs of the town. Detailed plans for the construction of adequate new filters, backed by British experts, have been laid before the Municipal Council. But these sixty leaders and guardians of the public weal, Indians all, have adopted a simple scheme. As I saw and heard for myself from the Indian Superintendent on the spot, they now filter 10,000,000 gallons of water a day, run it into the pure-water tank, then add 4,000,000 gallons of unfiltered sewage, and dish the mixture out, by pipes, to the citizens of the town. In judging this performance, one must remember that it

> takes longer to outgrow race thought and habits of life than it does to learn English.*

I would have the reader note the expression "four million gallons of unfiltered sewage," and also that Miss Mayo not only saw this sewage, but also an Indian Superintendent co-operated in inventing this definition. I will reply to this statement in the words of Mr. Alden H. Clark:

> Miss Mayo tells the story of the mixing of filtered and unfiltered water in Madras, as a clear indication of what can be expected from Indian control of affairs. How could she have heard this story without learning the striking fact that this water was universally known as "Molony's Mixture," that Mr. J. C. Molony, the Municipal Commissioner of Madras, was primarily responsible for it, and that he was backed in this war measure, which was so carefully managed that it had no bad effect, by the Europeans of the municipality? These facts Mr. Molony himself has made public. The case against Indian political control is indeed in a desperate state when the prosecution is driven to use "Molony's Mixture" to bolster it up! In this manner throughout the book Miss Mayo has ignored and minimized the great

**Ibid*, p. 364.

mass of favorable evidence that lay ready to a writer's hand, and the ugly and noisome have been made to dominate the picture.*

Atlantic Monthly, Feb. 1928. See also ***A Book of South India***, by J. Chartres Molony, p. 142, where Mr. Molony himself explains what happened. He makes it perfectly clear that he and his colleagues did the best they could with the funds available. He does not speak of the water from the Red Hills Tank as sewage. If it were such, even the filtered water would be filtered sewage, for it all comes from the same source.

CHAPTER XVII

MEDICINE

The chemist of Love
  Will this perishing mould
Were it made out of mire
  Transmute into gold.

Hafiz

MISS MAYO denounces the Indian indigenous systems of medicine. She quotes some extracts from *Sushruta Samhita*, an old book on the subject, which offers much good advice, but contains mediæval ideas such as the doctrine of signatures, and also spiritualistic conceptions of obsession. She laments because the reformers of India are supporting and encouraging the Ayurvedic and Unani doctors,* whose treatments take the form, I believe, mainly of herbal remedies. The general attitude of the Indians is that these old medicines ought not to be rejected without careful examination and study. I believe that is all they ask.

*Mother India, p. 386.

That Indian medical knowledge of old was not all superstition is clearly shown by Prof. Macdonell, who writes: "The beginnings of medical science reach far back into Vedic times. In the magical hymns of the *Atharvaveda* and the magical ceremonies of the ritual literature, especially the *Kaushika Sûtra*, belonging to this Veda, we find early acquaintance with the healing art and healing plants. In Vedic texts can be traced the beginnings of anatomy, embryology and hygiene. Thus the *Atharvaveda* and *Shaṭapatha Brâhmana* contain an exact enumeration of the bones of the human skeleton. The old name of medical science is *Âyurveda* or "Veda of longevity."*

Coming down to later times, Prof. Macdonell mentions a work of about the thirteenth century in which preparations of opium and quicksilver are described as remedies and feeling of the pulse in diagnosis is exactly described. In modern times, he adds, European surgery has borrowed the operation of rhinoplasty, or the surgical formation of artificial noses, from India, where Englishmen became acquainted with the art in the eighteenth century.

A case in which one of the Indian

**India's Past*, p. 175.

medicines has come within my own knowledge proves that there is sometimes great value in the old remedies. This was the experience of a Hindu gentleman, Dr. Bisey, D. Sc., Ph. D., a distinguished Indian inventor of type-casting and other machinery. In 1908 Dr. Bisey went to Madras as the guest of honor at the Indian National Industrial Congress, and must at that time have been badly bitten by dangerous mosquitoes, for when he went to Paris shortly afterwards he got very bad fever. Though attended by good doctors his fever went on month after month, and it was announced in the Indian papers that he was so ill that he would probably die. He went on from Paris to London, and the doctors there could not cure him.

One day he received a letter from an old-fashioned Indian doctor, who had read in the newspapers about his condition, begging him to accept some medicine, which was sent. Dr. Bisey first consulted his English physicians, who said, "Certainly we think you might try your friend's medicine." He did, and felt on the second day a little better. On the third day there was a sudden change; he was quite relieved from his fever, and it has never returned.

He wrote to the old-style Indian doctor

and requested him to let him have the formula. Being himself a chemist, he experimented with the formula and analysed it in different stages of its combination, and thus discovered that the Indian doctor was producing atomic iodine, which none of our chemists have yet been able to make.

Dr. Bisey is a practical man, so he at once proceeded to put on the American market a compound which is known as *Atomidine.* This compound is now being used by many thousands of American doctors and dentists, and is a great advance upon any previous use of iodine, because iodine in its atomic form can be taken internally without danger, as it is entirely non-irritant. Chemists and physicians will best understand the importance of this discovery, and will under the circumstances credit the possibility of there being other valuable medicinal secrets enshrined in the old Hindu medicines. It was lately announced that Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose would give before the Congress of Tropical Medicine in Calcutta a demonstration of six new and important discoveries of drugs.

To call all such knowledge superstition is itself bigotry. Touching India, we are dealing with an old civilization highly develo-



A Water Maiden.

Page 304.



A Water Man.

Page 305.

ped in a variety of ways, largely but not fundamentally different on each line of development from our own. Let us treat it with respect.

I do not mean to say that there is not a great deal of ignorance among the practitioners of the old type of medicine and that they do not make any mistakes. Even among our Western doctors there are fashions that succeed one another. Let us be sane and balanced in these matters, and give honour where it is due, and not where it is not due. Western medical science takes to itself a great deal of credit for public health which is rightly due to improved standards and conditions of living. It was improved living conditions, for example, not inoculation, which relieved Cuba of the yellow fever. One thing I learned from the Hindus was to put kerosene oil on pimples or incipient boils. This is too simple for most medical men, but it proves effectual.

A commentary on the non-infallibility of medical knowledge comes from the Dutch Government, which has introduced into Parliament a Bill cancelling for three years the Compulsory Vaccination Act for school children. This resulted from an acknowledgment by the medical profession that in a

number of cases after vaccination against smallpox and apparently because of it people became infected with encephalitis—a more serious and worse disease. It is estimated that in Britain less than fifty per cent. of the population have been vaccinated, although it is "offered" when the child enters school. In mentioning such a matter I wish to it be understood that I am not criticising Western medicine, but asking the critic to be open-minded with regard to both East and West.

Miss Mayo seriously disapproves of Mr. Gandhi's views on modern doctors. She calls his words "curiously lucid contributions" but obviously cannot see the meaning of them.

First, Mr. Gandhi rebukes the medical men of East and West for thinking first of the money they earn and only afterwards of the public service they can perform. He is quoted as questioning why most doctors adopt that profession, and saying: "It is certainly not taken up for the purpose of serving humanity. We become doctors so that we may obtain honours and riches. European doctors are the worst of all."*

The next extract is one in which Mr.

**Mother India*, p. 382.

Gandhi disapproves of the European medical preparations which "contain either animal fat or spirituous liquors." He would desire that we should seek medicines avoiding alcohol and animal substances. Then comes: "I overeat, I have indigestion, I go to a doctor, he gives me medicine, I am cured, I overeat again, and I take his pills again. Had I not taken the pills in the first instance, I would have suffered the punishment deserved by me, and I would not have overeaten again......A continuance of a course of medicine must, therefore, result in loss of control over the mind."

Surely it is here understood that Mr. Gandhi is looking beneath the surface for the causes of illness, and declaring that it is little use our curing ourselves unless we also remove the cause of the disease. Surely he is illustrating the idea well-known to everybody that sooner or later we shall have to get rid of diseases by attending to health. The chief cause of all our diseases all over the world lies in our disobedience to the laws of healthy living. We must at last learn to build up our lives and bodies scientifically, by proper attention to the rules of breathing, eating and drinking, exercise, rest and sleep, good feeling and pure thinking, and then diseases will have

little power over us, and medicines will be rarely needed.

The items of feeling and thinking are not to be ignored. Two years ago Sir James Crichton-Browne, the famous physician, at his eighty-seventh birthday party said that though nominally he was eighty-seven years old he was really only sixty. He gave his main rules of life as "No fads; good but moderate feeding and, if you like, drinking; clean living, active interest in human affairs." He said that in this way senility was beaten every time, and then invented a delightful sentence which deserves to become a proverb: "Those keep going longest who love most," making it clear that people should not expect health from medicines alone, and that the science of health is of first importance.

It was therefore not illogical, as Miss Mayo thinks, for Mr. Gandhi when suffering from appendicitis, to submit himself to the care of British surgeons. Miss Mayo's dramatically written story of the surgeon's caution and Mr. Gandhi's "pleading" is declared by Mr. Gandhi to be a travesty of truth. He explains in his paper *Young India*:

> I shall confine myself to correcting only what is libellous and not the other inaccuracies.

> There was no question here of calling in any Ayurvedic physician. Colonel Maddock, who performed the operation, had the right, if he had so chosen, to perform the operation without reference to me, and even in spite of me. But he and Surgeon-General Hooton showed a delicate consideration to me, and asked me whether I would wait for my own doctors, who were known to them and who were also trained in the Western medical and surgical science. I would not be behindhand in returning their courtesy and consideration, and I immediately told them that they could perform the operation without waiting for my doctors, to whom they had telegraphed, and that I would gladly give them a note for their protection in the event of the operation miscarrying. I endeavored to show that I had no distrust either in their ability or their good faith. It was to me a happy opportunity of demonstrating my personal goodwill.

Miss Mayo herself informs us that the Bubonic plague was first introduced into India in 1896. She then quotes some writer to the effect that India is now the chief reservoir of infection. It was interesting to me to note that India went so long without this infliction, notwithstanding her methods of living all

through the centuries! India was not then a source of danger in this respect. The old conditions evidently provided strong bodies, not the kind prone to disease. "The strength of men is rooted in food", says an old Hindu proverb. At present we have great vulnerability due to poverty, causing non-resistance to disease, and secondarily due to lack of schools and proper teaching in the schools. The same cause led to the death of more than six million Indian people in a few months during the influenza epidemic in 1918.*

Miss Mayo favors the northern races and thinks they are finer people because they are large meat-eaters. She alludes to the Muhammadans in this list. My experience with these people is that they are not large meat-eaters; they are meat-eaters, but they are small meat-eaters. She declaims against the diet especially of the southern Hindu as consisting of many sweets and carbo-hydrates. Nevertheless, there are fine physical specimens in Southern India. Most of these people in middle and even advanced age have a fine set of teeth. From them we have recently

*For exactly the same reason malaria, hookworm and tuberculosis are now very serious dangers. The death rate is increasing.

learned something of the folly of our own diet, for while they use their grains whole we polish them and deprive them of valuable vitamins. At the present time the dangerous Western nations are injuring the health of the Indians by introducing machinery for the polishing of rice and the refinement of wheat.

I do not wish to discuss vegetarianism. The Hindus hold to it on humanitarian grounds. Country people who have never seen meat-eating are horrified if they chance to come across it in any case. But there are also eminent medical authorities in the West who maintain that vegetarianism is better for health and strength than meat-eating. It is not possible to enter into detail into the study of this question here. I comment upon it only to deprecate ignorant dogmatism such as that which appears in the *ex cathedra* pronouncements of Miss Mayo. That our own food is open to criticism may be seen by reference to the *Lancet* (July 1927) where Colonel Halliday, a well-known member of the Indian Medical Service, who has spent many years in the study of the people amongst whom his work has lain, writes: "We find that a nation which subsists on a diet of pulse and wholemeal bread enjoys a striking immunity from the very

diseases and disabilities which afflict our own people so grievously. We have a C3 race, with a dentition so debased that it is unable even to masticate the emasculated paste which masquerades under the title of bread in this country; mothers who are unable to nourish their own children; widespread stunting and deformity from infantile rickets; an appallingly high percentage of rejections for physical unfitness among those recruits who present themselves for the army and navy; and, finally, a cancer mortality of one death in ten." Why criticize the food of Indians so lustily when this can be said of us ?*

For some obscure reason Miss Mayo quotes:

> "It is better to sit than to walk; to lie down than to sit, to sleep than to wake, and death is best of all," says the Brâhman proverb.†

This is the only Hindu proverb quoted in

*Life and Health (Nov. 1928) reports the experience of Dr. Robert McCarrison, who recently practised for nine years in India. Although he performed 3,600 surgical operations during that time, he did not see one single case of appendicitis, gall stone, ulcer or cancer of the stomach. He put this down to the people's food—they ate no meat, and the amount of sugar consumed in a year in a town of 30,000 people was less than that used in a large New York hotel in one day!

†*Mother India*, p. 379.

all her book. It would have been better to say *a* Brâhman proverb, not *the* Brâhman proverb; there are so many hundreds of these proverbs. This one I have not heard before. I am, however, very familiar with others, such as "By doing his own duty each man reaches perfection," or "Fortune attendeth that lion among men who exerteth himself; they are weak men who declare fate the sole cause," or "As a potter formeth the clay into whatever shape he likes, so may a man regulate his own activities."

Let the way in which Miss Mayo exaggerates almost all these things be shown once more:

> When the first Indian lady of the district can say to the English lady doctor brought to her bedside: "Why should I show you my tongue when the pain is so much lower down? And besides, if I open my mouth like that a lot more devils will jump in;" or when the chief landlord of the district will tie a great ape just beyond claw-reach of his ten-day-old son and then torment the ape to fury to make it snatch and snarl at the child, to frighten away the demon that is giving him convulsions, what is to be expected of the little folk squatting by the tank?*

**Ibid*, p. 376.

These freak examples are simply ridiculous. I wonder how many people in India keep infuriated apes in their houses in order to frighten devils out of their babies? I never heard of even one.

Chapter XVIII

THE CASTE SYSTEM

> Harmlessness, truthfulness, honesty, cleanliness, sense-control—this, in brief, is declared to be the duty of all castes.
>
> *Manu*

In olden days, when the caste system was originated or developed by Manu, the great law-giver of India, he divided the people into four kinds—the Brâhmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shûdra. These four classes of people exist in every nation, for the names refer to functions in the state or social body. In India they speak of the old system of organized human life as *varnâshrama dharma*. *Varna* means simply color or, in a general way, type, and *dharma* means duty and also law, because the laws prescribed for anybody are only intended to point out what are his duties in life.

It is a mark of the practicality of old

India that the conception of religious law was positive, that is to say, it prescribed what people ought to do. In the main it did not warn them what not to do, and prescribe penalties for disobedience. A further feature of its practicality was that it did not propose that all men should do the same kind of work in the world. There were four kinds of work, which exist to-day in England or America, as well as in India, or anywhere else.

The first order of people was the Brâhman, who was the brain of the State. He was entrusted with the maintenance and increase of what we may call the national stores of knowledge. It was his duty to study every activity of human life and to make that knowledge available for the use of the nation. He was thus the teacher of the people, the councillor of kings, and also the priest. In return for these services he received his living from the king. He could receive gifts from the people whom he served, but had no just claim to any payments for services rendered, which by the way is an idea somewhat reflected in modern life in the fact that certain professional men in England do not proceed at law for the recovery of fees.

With his living assured, it was the duty

of this professional man of old times to give his best attention to the department of knowledge. It was a matter of common dignity and honour that he should not seek to accumulate material power, luxury or wealth. As he gave himself to the brain work, he was not expected to fight as a soldier, to trade as a merchant, or to work as a labourer.

Those three functions belonged to the other three castes. The king, with his army and police (constituting the second caste, the Kshatriya), was the protector of the people from external aggression and from internal law-breaking. The holding and demonstration of executive power were his privileges. Protection of all the other people was his duty, as his name implies. So decidedly was this conceived that if a theft occurred under the old system and the police were not able to restore the lost property, it was part of the duty of the king to make it good from the royal stores. It was also part of his duty to assist the people in case of drought, from the great granaries in his charge.

The people of the third caste (the Vaishya), were also defined by their duty, which was to organize and carry on industry, and to distribute the produce according to the necessities

of the people. We find listed among their other duties, along with charity, sacrifice and study, which are common to all the three higher castes, the breeding of and dealing in cattle and domestic animals of all kinds, all the ways of trade and commerce, banking and agriculture. It was prescribed that the Vaishya should know all about mineral products, metals, gems and jewels, pearls and corals, perfumes, medical drugs, agriculture and horticulture, arable and sterile lands, cattle, weights, measures and standards, the geography of the world and the countries in which different objects of trade and commerce were produced.

The provision of this caste of merchants contained a measure of wisdom which people are only beginning to consider in these days. It laid some stress on the distribution end of industry, the aim of which was to satisfy the consumer and secure for him as much as possible of this world's goods.

Fourthly came the Shûdras, the vast mass of the people, the skilled and half-skilled labourers, for there was no proposition that there should be unskilled labourers at all. The social attitude towards this fourth class, who, it is enjoined, should not be too many, is shown

in the following explanation of the use of common terms :

> We may infer what the spirit of the ancient culture was towards the Shûdras of the community. The epithets of "youngest," "latest-born," "littlest brother," are applied to him constantly, and the tone is of affectionate patronage and gentle but firm rule. He is to labour, but his food and clothing must be sure, and such instruction as he can assimilate must be given to him. He is the child-soul, the younger member of the family. He is mentioned in the same breath with the women and the children, all objects of equally tender care.
>
> The head of the household is the *bhartâ*, which etymologically means the "nourisher and protector,". .The name for the wife is *bharya*, the "to-be-fostered." The name for the servant is another form of the same root, *bhritya*, the "to-be-supported."*

As the Shûdra is the younger soul, less is to be expected of him, therefore any punishments for crime meted out to him were to be less severe than to one of higher caste :

> The punishment of the Vaishya should be twice as heavy as that of the Shûdra ; of the

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**Science of Social Organization*, Bhagavan Das, pp. 317-8. For the entire subject of caste see this book.

> Kshatriya, twice as heavy again; of the Brâhmana, twice that of the Kshatriya, or even four times as heavy—for he knoweth the far-reaching consequences of sin and merit......By confession, by repentance, by self-imposed penances, by study, and by gifts of charity, the sinner and the criminal washes away his crime. The man who is held to punishment by the king, becomes verily cleansed from all stain of his offence, and is restored to his original status.*

It was not intended that the bulk of the people should be Shûdras. On this Manu says:

> The kingdom wherein Shûdras preponderate over the twice-born, and wherein error and lack of the higher wisdom are therefore rampant—that kingdom shall surely perish before long, oppressed with the horrors of misgovernment and epidemics and famines.†

In all this scheme of things it was conceived that each caste would act for the other castes as the different limbs of the human body act for the whole. So they said metaphorically that the Brâhmana was the head, the Kshatriya the shoulders, the Vaishya the thighs, and the Shûdras the feet. In an old Indian story there were two men, one blind,

* *Ibid*, p. 286.
† *Ibid*, p. 307.

the other lame. They got on well when the lame man sat on the shoulders of the blind man and directed him. So in this caste system it was laid down that the Brâhmana should use his knowledge entirely for the benefit of the other three classes, and each caste should do the same thing. It is a picture of a very cleverly organized society.*

Originally, one may judge, certain types of people naturally fell into their respective occupations, moved by their own temperaments. The thoughtful people became the Brâhmans, the restless, strongly emotional, adventurous spirits became the Kshatriyas, the conservative and methodical became the Vaishyas, while those with no initiative became the Shûdras. That such Shûdra types exist in the world has been shown by Mr. Henry Ford:

> There is no difficulty in picking out men. They pick themselves out because—although one hears a great deal about the lack of opportunity for advancement—the average workman is more interested in a steady job than he is in

*In the *Laws of Manu* there are occasional verses which violently disagree in spirit or method with the body of the work. We must regard these as interpolations, using common sense.

advancement. Scarcely more than five per cent. of those who work for wages, while they have the desire to receive more money, have also the willingness to accept the additional responsibility and the additional work which goes with the higher places. Only about twenty-five per cent. are even willing to be straw bosses, and most of them take that position because it carries with it more pay than working on a machine. Men of a more mechanical turn of mind, but with no desire for responsibility, go into the tool-making departments, where they receive considerably more pay than in the production proper. But the vast majority of the men want to be led. They want to have everything done for them and to have no responsibility. Therefore, in spite of the great mass of men, the difficulty is not to discover men to advance, but men who are willing to be advanced.*

I do not want to leave this part of my subject without reference to the way in which people within a caste often form a sort of brotherhood, quite apart from considerations of money. I was sitting one day with a circle of Brâhman friends on the front verandah of the house of a millionaire. The village post-

*_My Life and Work_, Henry Ford.

man happened to come along. He was a poor man, receiving perhaps fifteen rupees a month, but he came and sat beside the millionaire and joined in our conversation as an equal, because he was of the same caste.

Now, it will be asked what all that has to do with birth and heredity? As time went on, the question of birth became more rigid, until the caste of a man became entirely a question of heredity. That this was not so originally and was not intended, is shown by the following extract:

> The Shûdras in whom the soul awakens sufficiently to make them wish to live the life of the good and the virtuous, should be encouraged to live that life and should receive praise from all. They should be helped in all studies, but should not yet be entrusted with the secret words of power (*mantras*), which can be safely entrusted only to specially selected bodies. As such a Shûdra strives, with simple-hearted earnestness, to imitate the example of the good, so he makes progress in status, in this world and the next also. Because the seed of all possibilities is in all, because all have descended from and must merge again in the same Creator, therefore any soul might unfold any potency and make the others latent, by self-restraint or

> the reverse; and so may change from lower into higher class or caste, or the reverse . . . Not birth, not even formal sacraments, not superficial learning, make the twice-born and the Brâhmanas; those who know the inmost truth, the Rishis, have declared that character and conduct alone determine the caste of a man.*

Although there has been much confusion of caste and loss of the ideals of public service which the system proposed, and without which it is useless and injurious, the types of mind are in a general way visible in the present-day castes. It is a most obvious fact in India, as I have seen over and over again in schools, that Brâhman boys are generally possessed of more mental power than other boys, and that everywhere there is a sprinkling of these Brâhman boys who rise to the quality of genius and are more brilliant mentally, I think, than almost any other race in the world.

Almost everywhere people of the same class, having the same sort of education and the same interests of leisure, tend to marry among themselves. This tendency, from all accounts, was crystallized into a law, though it was provided, as we have seen, that people

*Manu, x, 127, 128, 42, ix, 335.

in a lower caste who showed strongly the quality of a higher caste might be promoted to that other caste. This, however, would be a comparatively rare necessity, because it was held that the very souls of men were of themselves of the Brâhmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya or Shûdra type. Their abilities, interests and pleasures would thus run along those respective lines. Then, when a soul was to be born into a human body, it would naturally in all normal cases take birth in a family of the caste to which it itself belonged.

It is the working of such a social order as this which is alluded to among the Hindus as their Golden Age, and is to some extent depicted in some of their books, as in the *Râmâyana*, which portrays the times of the ancient king, Shrî Râmachandra. The Hindus generally believe that the Golden Age really existed. Whether it did so or not need not be discussed here, but we must acknowledge that the conception of such a social order betokens a highly developed race of long ago.

Why did the race ever fall from that state? Because, it is held, in those early days of the race, divine beings lived among men and governed the Aryan nation. The nation itself was composed of human souls which had

incarnated many times in older nations and were now fit to be brought into a new nation more perfectly organized than before. But they were still children, relatively speaking, in the household of the Manu, himself considered as not an ordinary man, but a great Being, descended into a human body from on high. Under this tutelage and protection, like children in the house of their parents, the Aryan people dwelt for a long time. But in due course the great ones thought it necessary to withdraw themselves from visible management of human affairs, so that this child race might learn to walk by itself.

Under those circumstances, the child learning to walk has had many falls, but has been able always to stumble to its feet again, sometimes with the necessary assistance of a special incarnation, such a man as Shri Krishna, for example, who is reputed to have incarnated about 3000 B. C., and to have presented to the race his teaching and guidance in the form of the *Bhagavad Gìtâ*.

Ultimately it is expected that the Golden Age will be restored in the triumphant latter days of the progress of the Aryan race. Then all its scattered members will be united in one great harmonious group of nations. They will

have learned the wisdom of following the *Varnâshrama dharma** or the caste system in its proper sense. No longer as children but as men grown wise through experience they will follow the law and reap the prosperity and happiness of that systematic life.

This is what the Hindus believe, and, so believing, they honor the Brâhman as the best of men, as that man who most expresses the divine. This is the original of the idea of the "God-man" or rather "godly man." Every man is divine, according to the Hindus. That Christ-spirit is in some degree in all of us, but most of all in a man of the Brâhman character. To see this, let us take a description of the Brâhman from Manu:

> The birth of each Brâhmana is a new incarnation of duty. He is born for the sake of duty alone, not wealth and pleasure . . . Never may he follow the ways of the world for the sake of livelihood, but ever should he follow the uncrooked and the uncruel, the pure and the artless, ways of living. Contentment in respect of worldly things is the Brâhmana's way to the

*I have explained *varna* or caste. The term "*âshrama*" refers to the stages of life, which are four—the student period, the household period, retirement and renunciation. I cannot fully expound the subject of *âshrama* here.

> final goal; the opposite will only bring him misery. Never may he hanker after more when he has enough, nor gain even the enough by ways opposed to duty, even though in dire misfortune. Let him cast off the riches and possessions that hamper study. Study and teaching—the Brâhmana has done all his duty when he has done these. Let him not attach his soul to the things of sense, but withdraw his mind from them assiduously. The body of the Brâhmana was not given to him to squander away and make unclean in the pursuit of petty sensuousness; it was given to him that he consume it with the fire of *tapas*, securing by that chemistry the good of others here, and bliss immortal for himself hereafter.*

That the Brâhman has fallen from his duty and has grasped at material power and property is the tragedy of modern Hinduism. Further than this, caste has been divided and subdivided by these stumbling children until India has become a land of divisions which sorely torment her. If we like to go to extremes in classification, we can find, as the *Oxford History of India* says, about 3,000 of these social subdivisions. They concern chiefly the question of marriage, and restrict

**The Science of Social Organization*, p. 252.

the scope of choice of marriage partners. Next, they involve the practice of not eating together certain standard types of cooked food. Even these two remaining restrictions are rapidly breaking down.* There are many organizations working against caste in these days, some of them of immense size and power, such as the Arya Samaj. The caste of heredity belongs to the past and is automatically disappearing, but the caste of character and type of work will always remain.

"Mother India" deals largely with the caste system. It gives a picture of a modern Brâhman, or rather of the idea of the Brâhman which existed in the mind of a Brâhman-hater whom Miss Mayo met. Characteristically, when she wants to describe a Brâhman, she does not go to the Brâhmans, mingle with them, take part as much as possible in their life, talk to them and study them, but she goes (much as she goes to the Abbè Dubois generally for her pictures of India) to a low caste man "full of heat and free of tongue" and from him she obtains the description of

*In a recent interview Dr. Rabindranath Tagore declared that inter-dining among the various castes is now almost universal in Bengal, and that there is also a good deal of inter-marriage, which is increasing.

the Brâhman which she puts forth as a fair and just picture for the information of the world outside India.

The low caste man "full of heat and free of tongue", Miss Mayo's informant as to the nature of Brâhmans, was a Shûdra, not an outcaste. He was a caste man, one of those who have kept the outcastes at arm's length even as the Brâhmans have done. He could not have been an outcaste, for the Brâhmans do not officiate as priests for them. I will reproduce here some of this gentleman's hot and hasty words.

> Once upon a time when all men lived according to their choice, the Brâhman was the only fellow who applied himself to learning. Then, having become learned, and being by nature subtle-minded, he secretly laid hold upon the sacred books, and secretly wrote into those books false texts that declared him, the Brâhman, to be lord over all the people. Ages passed. And gradually, because the Brâhman only could read and because he gave out his false texts that forbade learning to others,* the people

*Yet Max Müller says: "So far from withholding it, the Brâhmans have always been striving, and often striving in vain, to make the study of their sacred literature obligatory on all castes except the Shûdras." *India: What Can It Teach Us?* p. 142.

grew to believe him the Earthly God he called himself and to obey him accordingly. So in all Hindu India he ruled the spirit of man, and none dared dispute him, not till England came with schools for all.

Now, here in this Province, Madras, we fight the Brâhman. But still he is very strong, because the might of thousands of years breaks slowly, and he is as shrewd as a host of demons. He owns the press, he sways the bench, he holds eighty per cent. of the public offices, and he terrorizes the people, especially the women. For we are all superstitious and mostly illiterate. The "Earthly God" has seen to that. Also, he hates the British, because they keep him from strangling us. He makes much "patriotic" outcry, demanding that the British go. And we—we know that if they go now, before we have had time to steady ourselves, he will strangle us again and India will be what it used to be, a cruel despotism wielded by fat priests against a mass of slaves, because our imaginations are not yet free from him.*

He then goes on to recite a large number of ceremonial occasions on which the Brâhman must be fed or given presents, and concludes by telling us that he is indolent and unproductive,

*Mother India, p. 146.

that he takes to no calling but the law or Government service, that he numbers in Madras a million and a half, whom the remaining forty-one millions have thus to feed.

According to the above statement the priests ought to be rich. I do not know how many Brâhmans are professional priests—not more than a million I should think. Most of the men of this caste are professional men or are in government or similar service; usually they are thus working hard to maintain their families on quite ordinary lines. Some are merchants and a few are landowners to-day. Compared with the educated Kshatriya and Vaishya the priests are for the most part poor. If these few Brâhmans were receiving more money from the people than the State itself, as Miss Mayo asserts, they would be rich men. It is true that people generally regard it as a meritorious act to feed Brâhmans at festival times. I know of many of them who go for days together almost without food, and subsist by eating heartily at those times. They are poor, though they do not look it, for all over the south of India, where they mostly abound, they sit with dignity and keep themselves and their clothing spotlessly clean.

In the villages the priest was one of the

persons provided for along with the schoolmaster, the potter, the smith and the rest of the village functionaries by the village council. He looks after the village shrine, and depends chiefly for his subsistence upon the free-will offerings of the people which they give mostly on ceremonial occasions.

The criticisms usually levelled against the Hindu priesthood apply to priesthood in many countries. Everywhere it tends to superstition, and superstition is twin brother to fear of the unseen and the unknown. When Benjamin Franklin experimented with his kites there were not wanting people who were furiously angry at his act of sacrilege; who was he to interfere with God's lightning and thunder? Priests have worked upon these terrors in all religions. But the Brâhman priesthood has never produced anything resembling the Spanish Inquisition. It has never even remotely conceived the idea of baptising and blessing ten thousand aborigines at a time and then shooting them all down so that they might go straight to heaven without the risk of becoming apostate, and so that incidentally the conqueror might enjoy their lands.

The Brâhman has administered the religion according to his lights for his own Aryan

peoples. The conquering Aryans of long ago pushed the original people back from their own settlements and excluded them from the Aryan temples and social life, but they did not massacre them so that the nation disappeared, as the red man has disappeared in North America, and as the South American Indian and the Australian aboriginal have disappeared. When the English were massacring the Scotch and the Irish, these people were carrying on their superstitions, but they were not so deadly as some that we have known. The reason for that lies in the smoother character of the Hindu people and in their idealism, largely derived from the thoughts and inspiration of the Brâhmans.

Priesthood tends to oppress people everywhere. I once had a Christian servant—a converted outcaste. He used to come to me periodically begging for money, in addition to his wages, because the priest expected him to pay for ceremonial services and to contribute to the church or the priesthood in various ways. It did not matter that he was desperately poor and in the hands of money-lenders. They collected as much as they could of his cash all the same, and turned his little boy out of their mission school because he could

not afford to pay the fees in addition to everything else.

The Brâhman has been a specially literary caste from the early times of the race. They are descended from ancestors who have pursued the same line of life for thousands of years. It is natural, then, that they should take to the professions of lawyer, doctor and teacher, and to all the offices that are open to them in Government service. These are the nearest things to the occupations which their ancestors have followed for the last five thousand years.

I have already mentioned that there are great numbers of boys wandering about seeking the means to pay their school fees, to buy those nasty coats and caps, and to obtain books and other things incidental to schooling. These are mostly Brâhman boys. They consider it no shame to beg for these things; indeed one of these youths came to me much hurt in his feelings not long ago because some European had told him he was a beggar. It was the tradition of the Brâhman to give his services, and live upon gifts. I have mentioned how some of the old type village schoolmasters lived in that way and were most honoured. People have no right to criticize these boys because they do not go and become labourers,

but want to follow the vocation of their ancestors.

The way out of the present condition is not the way of hot words and anger of the Shûdra gentleman whom Miss Mayo describes. Scarcely any Hindu will regard it so. Nor is it by insistence upon heredity and hereditary divisions; but through the ancient law which enjoins each man to use his best talents for the service of the nation. This also is similar to the Christian path. It is not a path of bitterness, of hatred and social war, but the path of brotherhood, of the Golden Rule, of doing unto others as you would be done by, and hating not those who despitefully use you. Outward caste of birth has been shattered and confused beyond repair, but the true caste system of duty remains in the heart. The thousand superstitions which cause people to cling to the outward fragments have as their kernel of truth and their vitality the law of mutual service which men will some day clearly see.



Little Brother, not Little Mother.

Page 336. *Ewing Galloway, N. Y.*



Page 337.

The Rush Hour at the Tap.

Ewing Galloway, N. Y.

CHAPTER XIX

THE OUTCASTES

As age doth banish beauty,
  As moonlight dies in gloom,
As slavery's menial duty
  Is honor's certain tomb;
As Hari's name and Hara's
  Spoken, charm sin away,
So poverty can surely
  A hundred virtues slay.

Hitopadesa

THOUSANDS of years ago the conquering Aryans descended from the north, spread throughout India and established themselves as its rulers and masters. They formed a higher civilization than the dark, thick-featured aboriginals, and in order to preserve their own purity of race soon found it necessary to exclude the earlier race from their more intimate social settlements and the immediate circle of dwellings. Thus arose the body of "untouchables" or outcastes whose

descendants number 28,500,000 in India to-day.

I use the term outcaste in preference to "untouchable" because among caste Hindus non-touching is the general rule. When Hindus meet they do not shake hands or slap one another on the back or rub noses. They have other modes of salutation, which do not involve touching. It is a sanitary rule with them to touch other members even of their own caste very little; only the very closest personal affection would warrant this conduct. It is no wonder that they should have developed degrees of this feeling, and that high caste people desire that the very lowest and dirtiest who eat foods that would make the Brâhman shudder should keep at a respectful distance.

These outcastes were not the builders of the great temples of Southern India, for the oldest of those dates back only about a thousand years. Nor can it be said that their downfall was due to "Brâhmanic Hinduism," which would be as though we should characterise the Battle of Plassey and what followed as "British Christianity."

As the new-comers did not exterminate the aboriginals, or Adi-Dravidas as they are called in South India, and yet did not mix with them,

something in the nature of a fifth caste arose. These people have in fact been called *panchama*, which means fifth. But Manu says there is no fifth caste, so they must be either non-Hindus or be admitted to the Shûdra caste.

Miss Mayo presents us with a very complete collection of all the disabilities of the present-day outcastes, which are bad enough, but are here exaggerated. For example, "Some are permitted to serve only as scavengers and removers of night-soil."* The suggestion of a personal element here is undesirable. These are economic questions. I remember well a certain family of outcastes who were so particularly anxious to retain a job of that kind on an estate where I once lived, that when some other people were called in to undertake the work, which they had been doing rather badly, they picketed the gateway and there ensued a pitched battle with the new-comers, who thereafter decided to keep away. One could not induce those people to go as agriculturists instead—they were getting better pay.

Again, "No Brâhman priest will minister to them." But that must be rather an ad-

Mother India, p. 153.

vantage, from the standpoint of the Shûdra of hot words—Miss Mayo's informant as to the nature of Brâhmans. It is not, however, necessary, for they have their own forms of worship, akin to nature-worship, with their own temples and shrines. They have no reason to enter the caste Hindu temples, as a rule. Even the foreign tourist, who belongs to the conquering white race, is not admitted to the central parts of the temples, but only as far as the flagstaff, from which he can see the shrine at a distance.

Miss Mayo tells us that the outcastes may not draw water from the public wells; this is correct only if we understand by public wells public caste-wells. I once, working with some Brâhman friends, arranged for the removal of an outcaste village to a better site than that which it had. First we bought for the people a large field and laid it out with streets at right angles in the modern American way* and then arranged with the people that they should build themselves new houses, each in its own plot in the new site. These houses

*This also is the same as the old Southern Indian method. The big towns and villages were laid out in rectangles with broad streets, as any one may see by visiting such cities as Madura and Coimbatore.

cost me five rupees each, and they were rather better than usual. The villagers did their own work in building them, and the money went into materials.

Fifty-five houses were built in this way. We then built for them a little school to which some Brâhman and other students used to go by turns to teach the outcaste children, supplementary to the work of the regular teacher. We next obtained some money with which to dig the villagers a well, but unfortunately we did not strike water, so I suppose they still walk a quarter of a mile to some other wells from which they had formerly obtained their water. Generally, however, the outcaste village has its own water-supply. Certainly *panchamas* do enter Courts of Justice and Dispensaries, notwithstanding Miss Mayo's statement. They come there in connection with the proceedings of justice quite as freely as anybody else.

She asserts that in some places outcastes are not allowed in the public road. That anyhow cannot apply to the general roads of a town, though it might be the case in some special Brâhman quarter in a country place. It would be ridiculous to imagine nearly thirty million people being excluded from the public

roads. We meet them constantly and almost everywhere. In fact, even in Miss Mayo's own book opposite page 163 I see a picture of an outcaste woman carrying a big basket through a busy street in Bombay City. Anyone who goes to the market or shopping streets of Madras, where there are most Brâhmans as well as most outcastes, will find the shops thronged with both these kinds of people, as well as all sorts of other people.

I have often sat with them in the little private omnibuses, adapted from Ford cars, which have become quite a feature of the Madras City roads of recent years. There might be a panchama on my left, a Brâhman on my right and a Muhammadan in front of me. Like the railway trains, these buses deserve the name of "the great caste destroyers." All sorts of people mingle on the railways in the big third class carriages, in which there are usually four long seats, one at each side along the windows and two back to back along the middle. But the European and the Anglo-Indian have a carriage for themselves specially labelled, and sometimes their carriages run empty or almost empty when the rest of the train is crowded almost beyond endurance, and people are sitting not only on

the seats and on the floor but even on the luggage racks overhead.* There is still, however, quite a good deal of the "white man's caste" on the railway. Many Indian gentlemen complain of being insulted and told to "get out" of a railway carriage because Europeans have wanted it and objected to travelling with a "native". I know that this occurs, for it happened twice to myself when for special reasons I was travelling in Indian dress and was mistaken for an Indian.

Miss Mayo is never satisfied. In her list she must include a statement such as this: "Dubois recalled that, in his day, a Nair (high caste Hindu†) meeting a Puliah‡ on the road, was entitled to stab the offender on the spot. To-day the Nair would hesitate."†† She does not tell us what he would do after hesitating, whether he would then stab or not stab. Does she suppose that Hindus generally carry knives about with them? Has she ever known any Nairs, and what splendid people they are, handsome in appearance and noble in charac-

*These special carriages have recently been abolished.

†Not any high-caste Hindu, but a certain community.

‡A certain community of outcastes.

††*Mother India*, p. 154.

ter? I number many Nairs among my personal friends, and know the suggestion to be ridiculous.

A story is told by Miss Mayo about a *paracheri* woman with her baby not being admitted at a baby welfare centre. Now, I do not say that that has not occurred somewhere and does not occur, but I can certify to the experience of my wife and other lady friends in the City of Madras and other places. They were sometimes in attendance at some of these baby welfare centres, to which a few hundred babies would be brought every day to have a bath and some little attention. These particular welfares were in good situations in main streets of the town, not in the *paracheri* or outcaste quarter. One of them was in a fine big house which was given for this use by the Brâhman gentleman who owned it and who had lived in it, which is testimony to its being in a good quarter. But no one ever there drew a distinction between the babies and mothers of different castes or religions. They came in by the hundreds and there were very many outcastes among them, but there was no suggestion of exclusion or of keeping of distances or standing on the doorstep.

Telling her story, Miss Mayo seeks to

bring out a contrast between the *panchama* and a high caste lady, who brought in a baby encrusted with its own dirt. We are expected to infer that all high caste babies are in that state. There is a complaint that this lady objects to using and washing napkins. Probably she prefers to wash the baby. Cannot people understand that Hindu customs are different from ours? Let me be plain. Hindus consider that Europeans are very dirty because they use paper in the privy. They themselves always use water, which they carry in specially shaped pots, because in their eyes washing with water is cleaner. I suppose the next complaint will be that the people are filthy because they don't use rolls of Japanese paper!

The Brâhmans are undoubtedly open to criticism for not having tried to teach the unfortunate outcastes, because it is the duty of a Brâhman to teach and to place his knowledge at the service of the entire community. This man, he might say, should strive for higher things and then he would become reborn within a caste family; that however does not excuse his neglect of his own *dharma* or duty in this world.

Still there are quite a number of move-

ments among the Hindus to raise the condition of the outcastes, and even to bring them within the fold. The *Times of India* for Sept. 11, 1912 gives an account of the effective work along this line carried out by a Hindu reformer, Pandit Rambhaj Dutt, and the way in which on one occasion more than fourteen hundred outcastes were received into caste, after being shaved by the caste barber and permitted to take water from the wells previously held exclusively by the caste people. The problem of the inclusion of these people within the orthodox social fold is not altogether dissimilar to the problem of inclusion of the negroes in the civilization of the United States.*

We must remember, however, that Indians are not all followers of the Hindu religion, but also of Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism and other creeds. The Christians and Muhammadans particularly represent proselytizing religions, which hold the door widely open to the outcastes, so that a great many conversions have taken place. There has also recently been a small Buddhist movement

*Tremendous strides in the helping of the outcastes have recently been made in Bangalore City, where one small group of workers, mostly Brâhmans, have rapidly advanced some two hundred outcaste boys into High School and College.

working on the same lines. When the outcaste thus becomes a Christian, a Muhammadan or a Buddhist he attains higher social rank in the eyes of the caste Hindu, and is no longer looked upon as "untouchable".

"Mother India" tells us that various movements are busy to-day helping the outcastes. "One of these" we are informed "is the tendency in the National Social Conference and in Hindu political conventions to declare openly against the oppression of the outcaste." It is more than a tendency. Then there are the missionaries, who have converted about 5,000,000 of the outcastes. Some of them have obtained material advantage through this, but some not so, like my poor Christian servant.

It is unfair to say that no conception of helping the outcaste "is native to India". Great numbers of Indians have for a long time been doing all they can. The problem of the outcaste in India, like nearly all the problems of the country, is the problem of poverty, with its attendant hunger, dirt, ignorance and degradation.*

Mr. Gandhi is another great element in this work of social reform. Miss Mayo tries

*I see that the outcastes are to be assisted with Rs. 50,000 from the estate of the late Lala Lajpat Rai.

to minimize his influence by referring to a meeting which was held in opposition to his proposals. Some people in that meeting thought that Hinduism supported untouchability. But Mr. Gandhi said, "I am as strong or stronger in denouncing untouchability, as I am in denouncing the British methods imposed on India. Untouchability for me is more insufferable than British rule. If Hinduism hugs untouchability, then Hinduism is dead and gone". This does not mean, of course, that Mr. Gandhi thinks that Hinduism is involved, but only that some other people think that.

But why these constant derogatory statements about indigenous efforts, and this emphasis upon the importance of Government work in these matters? Is it not the progress itself that matters, not those who do it? If these things can be done only by Governments, there ought to have been some legislation long ago, and more funds put to the service of these important reforms, which might well be regarded as a public investment.

The panchamas have not been without self-help also at times. They produced a literature of their own, some of which is constantly quoted with great admiration and

indeed reverence by all castes, including the Brâhman. Two of the greatest saints of whom South India is proud were Tiruvalluvar and Avvayar, who left great religious works of which every South Indian Brâhman is proud. They were outcastes, brother and sister. So it is not only that the panchama was not despised when he could show good work, but was admired and valued even when, if I may so put it, he was a woman. This is testimony to the liberality of Brâhman thought with respect to the work of the outcastes when that work is worthy of admiration.

Now, as to the schools. It is no use saying that the government insists on abolition of caste distinctions in connection with admission to Government schools. They have themselves set up a great number of "European Schools" reserved mainly for European and Anglo-Indian children. Racial and social distinctions are here prominent, and thus a new kind of caste is introduced, which arouses much more antagonistic feeling than the old caste.

One of the very strongest caste distinctions in India is that between the white man and the rest of the community. Even the Anglo-Indians form another subdivision. The pure white man does not like to intermarry with

them, or to admit them to his most intimate or familiar social circle. The Englishman or Englishwoman who marries an Indian is socially ostracized. Is not the rule that Indians shall not be admitted to certain high offices in the State and the army a kind of caste distinction really? I am not defending caste, but am saying that the Englishman in India often becomes more of a snob in thought and in practice than he ever does or ever did in England itself.

There is still a certain amount of rudeness in India, and I have occasionally seen Europeans, both men and women, poking coolies with stick and parasol and shouting at them on the platforms at railway junctions, but as Mr. William Archer, in his excellent chapter on manners in *India and the Future*, explains, "outrageous domineering and brutality are now very rare." He writes:

> There has been a great improvement, beyond a doubt, in the manners of Europeans towards servants and lower class Indians in general. The days are long past when the *memsahib* could send a *khitmutgar* to the cantonment magistrate with a chit: "Please give bearer a dozen"—lashes understood—knowing that the order would be executed without inquiry. I

have heard an official—a civilian, I am sorry, to say—cite admiringly John Nicholson's (alleged) exploit of tying a *tehsildar* to a well and making him turn the wheel for twenty-four hours, an orderly with a cat-o'-nine-tails standing over him the while. But this was narrated with fond regret, as a trait of the good old days never to return.

In contrast with this Mr. Archer mentions a delightful example of European politeness:

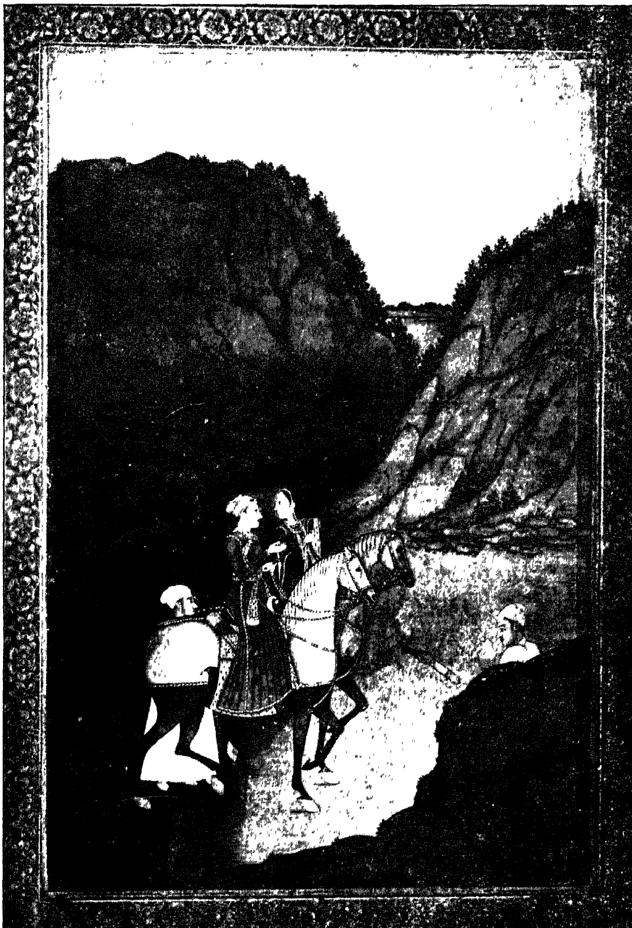
> I had the pleasure of spending some days with a British official of high rank who makes it a rule to exclude from his kitchen all pork, bacon and other products of the pig, in order that his Muhammadan subordinates may be able at any time to lunch or dine with him, without fear of partaking of any forbidden dish. As a matter of fact, I met at his table two Muhammadan members of his staff, who were evidently quite at their ease among their European colleagues. Here was an admirable instance of real, unforced, social intercourse.

To say that the Brâhman does now or will now try to keep the people in ignorance is quite wrong. Have I not shown in a previous chapter how the educational facilities of the State in Baroda and Travancore are extended to *all* the people? It was for this that

Mr. Gokhale worked in British India. It is for this that the hundreds of Brâhman and other politicians have been fighting for many years, that a greater portion of the revenues of the country might go to education of those who are not receiving it to-day, which means largely the outcastes. How can it be said, and reiterated again and again, that the object of the modern caste Hindu is to keep others in subjection? And who can blame the Brâhman if in an outcaste village there is no well? The outcastes know how to dig wells just as much as anybody else. If they cannot get tools or materials, surely it is the fault of a Government which has done nothing for these millions of people who live in villages of their own and in certain special suburbs of the cities, just as negroes have their special districts in many cities in America.

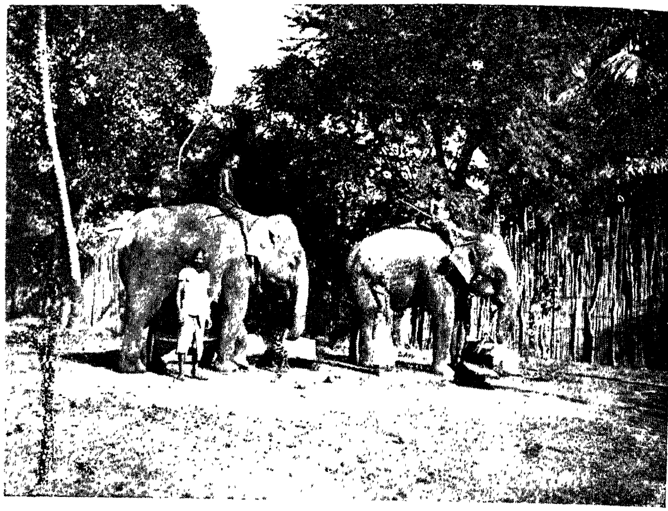
I like the account which Miss Mayo gives of the way in which some outcastes of Bengal arranged for schools for themselves. That is the way in which real good comes about. She says:

> The Namasudras of Bengal, an untouchable class there numbering about 1,997,500, have, under the encouragement of the new light, made a vigorous, steady, and successful fight



An Old Indian Painting.

Page 352



Elephants Carrying Logs.



Mounting an Elephant.

> for self-elevation, and have organized to support schools of their own. By the last report they had in Bengal over 49,000 children under tuition, of whom 1,025 had reached the High School and 144 the Arts Colleges, where, because of caste feeling, Government has been obliged to set aside special hostels for their lodging. This community is rapidly raising its status.*

Evidently in this case the High Schools and Arts Colleges have opened their doors to these people who are striving to improve their living conditions. In many places, as for example in Bombay, the schools are open to all children without distinction of caste or no-caste.

The difficulty for all these people when they try to open, let us say, High Schools and secure Government "recognition" is that they are generally required to have expensive buildings and equipment, to employ trained teachers, and above all other difficulties, to find an endowment fund, which must be invested in securities at a low rate of interest. The last is of course intended to secure the continuity of the school. Its purpose is good, but it makes progress difficult, and it is economically unsound to expect schools to live

Mother India, p. 160.

largely on a small income from a big endowment, when the people wishing to have the school are themselves living from hand to mouth. Put beside this the fact that private study is practically barred in a land which is short of schools, on the ground that it would tend to produce "crammers" or indiscipline in the schools, and the observer can see that delay in Indian educational progress is not due to the attitude of the Brâhmans.

The number of literates among the *panchamas* has increased 100 per cent. in the last ten years, but the Indians would like to do still more for them. In the legislative assembly in Feb. 1928 Lala Lajpat Rai moved that ten million rupees be provided for the education of this class of people. This was defeated by Government on the ground that education cannot be paid for from Central funds. Yet it was pointed out that grants from these funds are made for the education of Anglo-Indians and Europeans. The reason for this is that the education of European and Anglo-Indian boys and girls is not a "transferred" subject. A few years ago the Government contribution to the education of each Indian student was about five rupees a year, while to that of the European it was about sixty.

CHAPTER XX

THE PRINCES

> Only the ruler who has conquered his own senses can win the minds and the hearts of his people. The pure, the true, the wise, the learned in the sciences, the well supported—such only can wield the rod of power safely.
>
> *Manu*

THE first invasion of India within historical times was that of Alexander the Great in 326 B.C., by which he became master of a province reaching as far east as Delhi. His power did not last long. Shortly afterwards the dominions of the Indian Emperor Chandragupta extended as far west as Afghanistan. The next serious invasion leading to any degree of foreign government was that of Abul Qasim in the middle of the eighth century of our era. It then took four hundred years for the Muhammadans to establish their rule, their first King of Delhi being Kutb-ud-Din Aibak, 1206 A.D.

For three centuries this Rule was confined to northern India, until Akbar conquered Rajputana, Central India and the Deccan in the sixteenth century. For a century and a half the Great Moguls—Akbar, Jehangir, Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb—ruled in great splendour. After that, a century and a half of rebellion and trouble—during which many independent States were established under Hindu and Muslim Chiefs, Râjâs and Nawâbs—led to the final downfall of the old dynasty, and the establishment of the British Indian Empire at the close of the Indian Mutiny or Sepoy Rebellion in 1857.

This Muslim rule was not foreign rule, any more than that of William the Conqueror or William of Orange in England. Those two kings became Englishmen, lived in the country and had their interests there. Similarly the Muslim rulers became Indians; their personal and family interests were completely identified with the country, and they employed all people of the country according to their ability in public offices, so that we find, for example, a Hindu prime minister, a Hindu commander-in-chief, a Hindu finance minister and even a Hindu governor of Kabul. The number of Muhammadans increased but mainly by con-

version, so that to-day out of seventy million Muslims in India all but eight millions are of Hindu ancestry. Even these are "Indians first and Muslims afterwards."*

The British rule, however, is foreign, for it has its headquarters abroad, recruits its principal servants abroad, disarms the population, and is largely influenced by traders of Lancashire and others having interests abroad. All the governing people in India are now birds of passage, whom more and more of the Indians are regarding, rightly or wrongly, as birds of prey.

Two-fifths of the area of India, approaching two million square miles in all, is divided up into a number of Indian States of various sizes, having a total population of 72 million people. The Princes governing these States are mostly Hindus and Muhammadans, but there are a few Sikhs and others. On assuming the throne of India, Queen Victoria declared with respect to these:

> "We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of the Native Princes as our own; and we desire that they, as well as our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and that social

*Mr. Mazar-ul Haq, President of the All-India Muslim League, declared "We are Indian Muslims Indian Muslims are Indians first."

advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government."

Miss Mayo tells us that the Indian States are of three kinds, good, medium and bad. Several are well governed, most are fairly governed, and a few are governed badly. She says that "the old normal relation of the prince to the people was the relation of a huge-topped plant to a poor, exhausted, over-taxed root. He squeezed his people dry, giving little or nothing in return."* Let us see what competent observers of the older times have to say about this. Writing of the Mahrattas, Mr. C. J. O'Donnell says:

> The dominions of the Mahratta sovereign passed under British rule in 1817. The then land revenue was 80 lakhs of rupees (a lakh being 100,000). The following year it was raised to 115 lakhs, and in 1823 to 150 lakhs, already nearly double the native assessment of six years before! . . . . Writing nearly seventy years later, the Government of Bombay in its Administration Report for 1892-93, page 76, gave the following description: "Every effort was made—lawful and unlawful—to get the utmost out of the wretched peasantry, who were subjected to torture—in some instances

***Mother India*, p. 309.

cruel and revolting beyond description—if they could not or would not yield what was demanded. Numbers abandoned their homes, and fled into neighbouring Native States; large tracts of land were thrown out of cultivation, and in some districts no more than a third of the cultured area remained in occupation."*

James Mill wrote:

Mysore, under the Government of Tippoo Sultan, was the best cultivated, and its population the most flourishing in India, while under the English and their dependents the population of the Carnatic and Oudh, hastening to the state of deserts, was the most wretched upon the face of the earth, and even Bengal, under operation of laws ill-adapted to the circumstance of the case, was suffering all the evils which the worst of Governments could inflict.†

Bishop Heber, writing of Bharatpur State declared that:

The villages were in such condition and repair, and the whole afforded so pleasing a picture of industry, and was so much superior to anything I had been led to expect in Rajputana, which I had seen in the Company's

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**The Failure of Lord Curzon*, by C. J. O'Donnell, p. 21.

†*History of British India*, by J. Mill, Book vi, Chap. viii.

territories, that I was led to suppose that either the Rajah of Bharatpur was an extremely kind and parental Governor or that the system of management adopted in the British provinces was in some way or other less favourable to the improvement and the happiness of the country than that of some of the Native States.*

Next, Miss Mayo mentions that the tendency of State Government at present is to level upwards, largely on account of the growing ambition of the chiefs with respect to the condition of their properties. She mentions also another case of improvement and progress when " the removal of an unfit ruler leaves the administration of the State in the hands of the Resident, with, it may be, a regent, during the minority of the heir." This reference to the removal of an unfit ruler may show the reader that the States are not now quite as independent of the Government of India as might at first sight appear.

Miss Mayo mentions first a case in which such improvement took place during the minority of a prince, but that after he came into power there was very rapid deterioration.

*_Memoirs and Correspondence_ of Bishop Heber, vol. ii, p. 361. Lala Lajpat Rai quotes many similar authoritative statements.

Surrounded by false friends, who played upon him with flattery and self-indulgence, he soon spoiled the good work that had been done before he came into power.

This is a danger which has appeared all over the world, wherever we have had anything approaching absolute monarchy. Things go well while the ruler is wise and good, but sooner or later a foolish or selfish ruler, appears. The downfall of the Mogul Empire and the country's being thrown open to foreign conquest are often considered to have been due to the arrival of an unworthy emperor in the person of Aurangzeb. Akbar had built up a splendid empire, probably the finest in the world in its day.* Jehangir and Shah Jehan in turn carried it on with success, but it is said that the next emperor, Aurangzeb (1658-1707), in his intolerance, persecuted the Hindus, and so undermined the great empire. In time this produced rebellion all over the country, the Hindu Mahrattas carrying the war even to the very gates of Delhi.

*"Akbar forbade trial by ordeal, animal sacrifices and child-marriage before the age of puberty." As to Aurangzeb : "His bigotry made an enemy of every one who did not share his own faith." Sir W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Empire : Its Peoples, History and Products*, pp. 349 and 370.

The break-up of the Mogul Empire was assisted by the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739, who swept over India and sacked Delhi. Hindu chieftains and Muhammadan nawabs and generals now set up their own kingdoms. When the last of the Mogul Emperors was banished in 1857 for his association with the mutineers, rule by Muhammadans had already given place very largely to rule by Hindus over great tracts of the country. If that had not been the case, the majority of the Princes to-day would be Muhammadans. As it is, there is only one very big State having a Muhammadan ruler, and that is Hyderabad in the Deccan. No claim can therefore be now made to rule India on the ground of religion.

The second case mentioned by Miss Mayo, which turned out favourably, was the regency of Mysore, a State nearly as big as Scotland. The Prince previous to the present ruler died in 1894, leaving a minor heir. Until 1907 the State, in the hands of the Queen-regent, was under British guidance. In 1907 the Prince was enthroned and has since governed his State very well. He has in fact introduced measures of self-government among the people, and has thus made himself a constitutional monarch.

A fact that we should notice, as Miss Mayo points out, is that though the Mahârâja of Mysore is a devout orthodox Hindu, he has chosen a Muhammadan as his Prime Minister.* The point to note here is that a Hindu Prince has chosen a Muhammadan Prime Minister because it appeared to him that this was the best man for the post. I may mention another incident of the kind. Some years ago, H. H. the Nizam of Hyderabad arranged for the use of text books of Hindu religion published by the Central Hindu College at Benares among the Hindu pupils in his schools.

In these two instances we see the liberality of thought of Hindu to Muhammadan and of Muhammadan to Hindu. When we remember that the two States in question are the two biggest States in India, we see that these facts are of great significance. As far as I can recall, in these two States there have been no clashes between Hindus and Muhammadans. We will remember these things when it is said that Hindu and Muhammadan cannot live amicably together.

Miss Mayo relates an old story about a Prince whose Prime Minister declared, with his approval, that he was getting his troops in

*_Mother India_, p. 312.

shape, accumulating munitions and coining silver, and if the English departed "three months afterwards not a rupee nor a virgin will be left in all Bengal."* This story was told very many years ago of the honoured and famous Sir Partab Singh, but when it was brought to his notice he declared it false. Presiding at a Congress thirteen years ago the late Lord Sinha referred to it as "the grim joke."

The position and attitude of the Princes can best be understood, I think, from some of their recent speeches. The Mahârâja of Patiala, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, speaking in February 1928, at the banquet in honour of the States Enquiry Committee, stated that the Princes "are not hostile to the aspirations of British India, and have not the least desire to oppose them." In the same speech the Mahârâja also explained how the Government had encroached upon the liberty of the Princes. Referring to the treaties as somewhat out of date, and containing gaps when applied to modern life, he said:

> Through these gaps the well-nigh irresistible influence of the Government of India tends to percolate, thereby modifying, as it seems to the

**Ibid*, p. 314.

Princes, many aspects of the political relationship in a direction unfavourable to themselves, their autonomy, the development of their States and the welfare of their subjects. Further the Government of India, as is the natural tendency of all great corporations, advances progressively from step to step. It consolidates its position. It proceeds to further lengths. Thus, as years go by, the Princes feel they are helpless spectators of a cumulative process which threatens to end disastrously for themselves.*

We would plead for a fundamental consideration of the problem as to whether there be not room within the wide confines of this country for two sister polities—albeit dissimilar in size and in organization—in one of which the democratic and in the other the monarchic principle is established.

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*"It would perhaps be ungenerous to probe too narrowly the dependent position and consequent involuntary action of the feudatory chiefs. They are powerless to protect themselves. There is no judicial authority to which they can appeal. There is no public opinion to watch their interests. Technically independent under the suzerainty of the Empire, they are practically held in complete subjection. Their rank and honours depend on the pleasure of a British Resident at their court, and on the secret and irresponsible mandates of a Foreign Office at Simla." *New India*, by Sir Henry Cotton, p. 34.

Again, H. H. the Mahârâja of Bikanir, in an address to the Legislative Assembly of his State in January 1928, said:

> I assert without any fear of contradiction that—whilst all the 108 members of the Chamber of Princes cannot necessarily be expected to hold the same views—so far from the Princes as a body having expressed any hostility to the legitimate aspirations of, or having taken any other improper steps with a view to opposing or checking the progressive realization of, constitutional reforms in British India, they have on various occasions not only made it abundantly clear that they have no desire to stand in the way of the political progress of their brethren in British India, but they have also taken various opportunities, both in England and in India, of publicly expressing their approval and support of such constitutional reforms.
>
> India is the common heritage of the peoples of British India as well as of the Indian States; and the one will find the other of help and use; and it behoves both to respect the rights and liberties of each other, to refrain from interfering with their respective domestic affairs, and to derive the benefits which each one is in an undoubted position to offer to the other.

Similarly, inaugurating the fifth session of the Bhopal State Legislative Council (Sept. 1929), the Nawab of Bhopal said:

> British India is forcing the pace towards complete Self-Government, and we of the Indian States have declared, more than once, that our full sympathies are with them in their aspirations towards the attainment of Dominion Status within the Empire. The Princes will be prepared, whole-heartedly, to co-operate and to bring their States into line with British India in any honorable, fair and just settlement which will conduce to the welfare of our Motherland and the good of the Empire. We fully realize our obligations to our country, and I have no hesitation in saying that we regard it to be our foremost duty to see that we are not a drag on her.

The Mahârâja of Alwar, speaking at a State Banquet in honour of the Viceroy, said that Lord Irwin's name might go down to posterity as that of a Viceroy who championed the cause of a dependency and made it a Dominion. He went on:

> We wish India to obtain her rightful place within the Empire, and so may British India and Indian States, by taking their place alongside in the march of events, attain the ideal,

not only of a combined and grateful India, but an India that may prove to be a source of true and great strength to the Empire.

Have we shown that the Princes are not of murderous intent, as Miss Mayo affirms? The rulers of the Indian States are for the most part enlightened and modern gentlemen, who, along with their parliaments and officers, have no desire whatsoever to plunge the country into war on religious or ambitious grounds. It is perfectly intelligible that the Princes would regard it as undignified "to admit the Indian politician of the Reforms Government as an agent to their courts,"* but no one has proposed such a procedure, but rather that the States should share in the Home Rule policy under their own rulers. One thing is clear, however, that representative Government is bound to come in India—in British India and in all the States.

An example of the willingness of the Princes to become constitutional monarchs is to be seen in Aundh State, where, at the instance of the Chief, a Prohibition of Liquor measure has been passed. This Chief uses cloth woven in his own State, and also places

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**Mother India*, p. 316.

the entire budget, including his own private expenses, before the Representative Assembly.

To make her picture complete, Miss Mayo accredits to some Bengali Hindus of the professional classes the intention to "wipe out" the Princes. Let us put beside this statement the fact that the leaders of British India who have been engaged in framing Constitutions have put into them clauses guaranteeing the recognition and support of the treaty rights.

CHAPTER XXI

THE MUHAMMADANS

> Let there be no violence in religion. If they embrace Islam, they are surely directed; but if they turn their backs, verily unto thee belongeth preaching only. To make them walk in the right way is not incumbent upon you; but Allah guides whom he pleases.
>
> *Muhammad*

IT is commonly thought that Muhammadanism is essentially aggressive. Truly both Christianity and Islam are proselytising religions, and both have been guilty of carrying it on with gun and sword in the dark days of history, but such things do not belong to the present day nor did they belong to the beginnings of any great religion.

When the Prophet, having fled from Mecca, established himself successfully in Medina, he tried to weld the heterogeneous tribes of Arabs and Jews into some sort of confederacy. The Covenant which he con-

cluded with these peoples contained sentiments most enlightened, such as: "The Jews of the various branches and all others domiciled in Medina, shall form with the Moslems one composite nation. They shall practise their religion as freely as Moslems; the clients and allies of the Jews shall enjoy the same security and freedom. All the Moslems shall hold in abhorrence every man guilty of crime, injustice, disorder. No one shall uphold the culpable, though he were his nearest kin."

Mr. Syed Amir Ali, in *The Spirit of Islam*, mentions another interesting document of the same catholic character, the Charter granted to the monks of St. Catherine monastery.

> By this Mohammed undertook himself, and enjoined on his followers also, to protect the Christians, to defend their churches and the residences of their priests, and to guard them from all injuries. They were not to be unfairly taxed; no bishop was to be driven out of his bishopric; no Christian was to be forced to reject his religion. . . Nor were the Christian churches to be pulled down for the sake of building mosques or houses for the Moslems. Christian women married to Moslems were to enjoy their own religion. If Christians should stand in need of assistance for the repair of

their churches or monasteries, or any other matter pertaining to their religion, the Moslems were to assist them. This was not to be considered as taking part in their religion, but as merely rendering them assistance in their need. Should the Moslems be engaged in hostilities with outside Christians, no Christian resident among the Moslems should be treated with contempt on account of his creed.

Later on, when the Prophet was strong and the people of Mecca, the Koreish, surrendered and offered submission to him, he spoke to them:

"Descendants of Koreish," said he to his erstwhile mortal enemies, "how do you think I should act towards you?"

"With kindness and pity, gracious brother and nephew," said they.

At these words, says Tabari, tears came into Mohammed's eyes and he said, "I shall speak to you as Joseph spoke to his brothers. I shall not reproach you to-day. God will forgive."*

Mohammed did not set up a new dogma. He preached Islam, which means submission, that is, submission to the will of God. This he called the true religion—to be resigned unto

*_Mohammed : The Prophet of Arabia_, by H. C. Kumar, p. 14.

God. He declared that he did not wish to destroy former teachings, but only to restore them to their original purity.* He did not preach aggression, but permitted self-defence; "If they desist from opposing you, what is already past shall be forgiven them . . . But if they return to attack you . . . fight against them until there be no opposition in favor of idolatry and the religion be wholly God's."

In another place he says: "If you take vengeance from any, take a vengeance proportionable to the wrong which hath been done you; but if you suffer wrong patiently, verily this will be better for the patient."

Miss Mayo strongly emphasizes the idea that, given the least opportunity, the Muhammadans and Hindus would be at each others' throats. But all the facts of any importance point the other way. I have already shown how harmoniously they are related in the States of Hyderabad and Mysore, also that no one has a reversionary right to the Indian Empire. Besides, all have before them the splendid example of tolerance shown by Akbar, who though himself a Muhammadan ruled not as a Muhammadan but as a man.

Sometimes, but not frequently, there is

*Ibid, pp. 22-3.

conflict between very ignorant Hindus and Muhammadans. If the Hindus persist in making a noise near a mosque at the time of prayer, or if the Muhammadans try to annoy the Hindus by killing a cow in front of their temple, there are sometimes riots. These are not frequent when one thinks of the extent of India; they occur only among ignorant people and they do not last long. Above all, they are nearly always excited by a few ruffians or hooligans whose delight is merely to create a row.

Miss Mayo relates a particular example from Lucknow where the municipal authorities opened a park in one corner of which there already happened to be a little Hindu temple on the land. The Muhammadans thought they would like to have a place of worship in the same park, which the municipality granted. Both parties pray at sunset, according to their old rules, but lately the Muhammadans began to object to the Hindu bell-ringing and other noises. There was likely to be friction, but with great tact the British District Commissioner was able to smooth things over. The suggestion is that but for the British there would have been great trouble.*

Now, I submit that if there had been no

**Mother India*, pp. 335-8.

British Commissioner there would have been the members of the municipal council, composed of men and perhaps women belonging to both the religions as well as others. These responsible persons, united in their disapproval of such absurd disturbances, would have reasoned with the ignorant, excited people, and they, seeing that their leaders were in amity, would have dropped their ridiculous quarrel immediately.

The rule of a third party tends to excite communalism, because each one thinks that the powers that be may favor the other man. There is a sort of jealousy inculcated. Incidentally, the authority cannot act firmly, for fear of being regarded as partial.*

The system of communal electorates in India, favored by the British but not by the majority of Indian people, also tends to accentuate divisions and to preserve whatever

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*The Mahârâja of Jodhpur, speaking at a State banquet in honor of the Viceroy (January 1928), said "Mutual trust and tolerance have prevailed amongst my subjects, Hindus and Musalmans, with the result that the public peace has remained undisturbed throughout the State." This is the case generally in the Indian States. Religious conflicts are almost entirely confined to British India. Even as regards British India, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore says that when he was young there was practically never any conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

differences may exist, and even to make religious differences a subject of electoral appeal. These religious differences should be kept out of politics. The many sects in Christianity do not connote political antagonism or separate interests. If they did, we should need a hundred communal electorates in England. It is not very long since Protestants turned Roman Catholics out of their houses in Liverpool and burnt their furniture in the streets. How then, it may be asked, can a Roman Catholic represent Protestants or an Anglican a Dissenter? England has very sensibly ignored religious differences in her own political field. Our policy in India inflames them.

The fact that so many Muslims signed the statement (Feb. 16, 1928) of Indian Party Leaders to continue the boycott of the Statutory Commission shows that they are just as eager for Home Rule as the Hindus. I will italicize the Muhammadan names: *Dr. Ansari,* Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, *Maulana Abul Kalam Azad,* and *Maulana Muhammad Ali* (Congressmen); Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Malaviya (Nationalists); Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Kelkar (Responsivists); and *Mr. Jinnah,* Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, *Maulvi Muhammad Yakub* and *Raja Ghoznafarali Khan* (Independents).

More lists of names were added as time went on, and all contained a reasonable proportion of Muslims. Later the Legislative Assembly decided by 68 votes against 62 to non-co-operate with the Commission—of the elected members these represented 67 to 12—once more showing how the representatives of the people stand together. It may also be noted that Mr. Gandhi's first lieutenant and immediate successor in the *Satyagraha* movement of 1930, was a Muhammadan, Mr. Abbas Tyabji, formerly Chief Judge of Baroda.

Miss Mayo gives us extracts from the statements presented by various Muslim associations to Mr. Montague in 1917, when he sat in Delhi to hear what the people had to say about reforms in India. These quotations come from various organizations which disapproved of the action of the All-India Muslim League, which had proclaimed the identity of the Muhammadan and Hindu interests in India, and had joined with the Hindus in the demand for Indian Home Rule. Mr. Montague was there to hear all sorts of opinions expressed by everybody. It is not difficult to pick out from the mass of documents presented to him a number of statements by timid organizations which exist here and there. Some of them

were very crude. I wonder why Miss Mayo quotes the following, for example, from the Ulema of Madras:

> "Verily, Polytheists are unclean!" In case the British Government were to hand over the administration, as desired by the Hindus, it would be contrary to the Sacred Law of Musalmans to live under them, Polytheists.
>
> Saiyid Muhi-ud-din
>
> Trustee of the endowments of the
>
> Amir-un-Nisa. Begum Sahiba Mosque.
>
> One who is forgiven!*

The amount of ignorance here displayed in a few lines is typical of whatever communal propaganda there is in India. It is a touching commentary upon our neglect to provide education.

It is misleading to say that troubles rise out of an inevitable conflict between Muhammadans who believe in one God, and Hindus who believe in many Gods, between Muhammadans who disapprove of pictorial or sculptural representation of God and Hindus who make very full use of such forms of art in their religion. Every educated man in these days knows that the Hindus are monotheists. They believe that the one God manifests

*_Mother India_, p. 342.

himself in many forms, but that these are, to put it in Christian terms, "Ministers of his that do his will." As to the Trinity, which Miss Mayo emphasizes as repugnant to the Muhammadans—the Musalman knows that the doctrine of the Trinity exists in Christianity, just as it does in Hinduism, and he has no reason to object to it more in one case than in the other.

Every religion has its errors and misunderstandings. When the Muhammadan says "There is no God but God," he announces that there is but one God. He is really quite at one in this with the Christian and the Hindu. Their doctrines maintain that the Three are One, that is, three aspects of one being. In fact, all these religions are in a sense one religion. I have had ample opportunity to prove this over and over again, as I have many friends belonging to different religions. If I ask a Christian friend why he follows Christ, he will say, "Because he taught us the doctrine of love, and showed it in his life." If then I enquire, "Suppose that the Christ had not shown and taught love, would you follow him,?" the answer is, "No." "Well then," say I, "it seems to me that you are following love, and you are following Christ

because he tells of and expresses love." It reminds me of a saying of Jacob Boehme that "in some sense, love is greater than God." If a man has a conception of God that is less than love, then love is greater than that God.

I might have exactly the same conversation with a Buddhist, a Jain, a Sikh, or a Musalman friend. They are all followers of love. All good men belong to one religion, the religion of love. In these days people are recognizing the fact that there is not one God for each separate religion, but one for all. The many evil superstitions which we are asked to believe in as the moving springs in human life, the murderous spirit and blood lusts of the middle ages, are fast passing away.

Miss Mayo has given a picture of the Moplah rising of 1921. These ignorant people (who ought to have been taught Civics and other subjects in schools long ago) are descendants of Arabians and Indian women. They are Muhammadans, and a very fierce and untutored people. Many of their men are drivers of passenger carts, or *jutkas*, on the West Coast, and I can testify that to be driven by these reckless beings is a thrilling experience. They urge their little ponies along at a

great pace; sometimes you are on one wheel and a moment later on the other wheel; stones and pot-holes in the road are entirely disregarded; they take every chance in sight, and often race each other. You could admire their courage and skill were it not compounded with so much recklessness and thoughtlessness.

These people, hearing from unwise and inaccurate political lecturers that the British, after the fall of Turkey, were attacking their *Khalif*, or religious leader, who was also the Sultan of Turkey, began to see red, as some Catholics might do if there were an attack on the Pope and his influence over his co-religionists. Their wildness broke out first of all in the murder of an Englishman, and then followed a most dreadful attack upon the Hindu communities in the neighbourhood.*

Various accounts have been given of what happened; there was much bloodshed, and many forcible conversions took place before the police and soldiery were able to quell the disturbance. Miss Mayo supplements the picture with an account of the way in which Brâhman priests extracted money from the afflicted people before they would receive them

* *Ibid*, pp. 329-32.

back again into Hindu orthodoxy. I had not heard this part of the story before.†

Bad as the Moplah rising was, it cannot be taken as an indication of the general character of the Muhammadans throughout India. Also it cannot be taken as any gauge with reference to the future of India. Those Muhammadans in India who became excited about the question of the Khilafat were soon to be enlightened with the spectacle of Kemal Pasha's treatment of the Khalif, the Sultan of Turkey. It did not take the new Turkish Government long to dispose of that matter, and indeed of many other old-fashioned things. They soon passed a law liberating the women in their country from the veil, and another against child-marriage. The more intelligent and enlightened Muslims in India are also prepared to promote the laws which their compatriots were so ready to pass in Turkey. And their Hindu companions in the Government of India will stand by them in these reforms.

† Mr. S. Satyamurti says: "Her history of the Moplah Rebellion in this book is propaganda pure and simple, and is not based on facts." (*The Hindu*, Sept. 15, 1927). This was written in South India, where the correctness of his statement may be judged by many people who suffered in that rising.

Miss Mayo exaggerates beyond all recognition whatever differences there may be in India. There is really no foundation, for example, for the following:

> Wherever choice rests in Indian hands, every office must be filled, every decision taken, every appropriation spent, on religious communal lines, while the other side fights it, tooth and nail, and the actual merits of the matter concerned disappear from the picture.*

She makes the most of a speech by a "mountain-bred man of Persian ancestry." He is grateful to the British for providing roads, telephones (!), water, peace, justice, trade, safety, hospitals and schools. I suppose the Japanese are grateful to their own Government for the same. He ends with the ingenuous statement: "India is a big country and needs all our united strength can do for it, Muslims and British and even Hindus. But without the British no Hindus will remain in India except such as we keep for slaves."†

This gentleman evidently belongs to a "backward" tribe. I think the Indians will be able to send him back to his mountains if

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**Mother India*, p. 343.

†*Ibid*, p. 347.

he comes down trying to make the trouble that he suggests.

Miss Mayo continues in the same spirit:

> Always an eager litigant, the Indian finds in his religious quarrels endless occasions for appeals to law. But, if the case must be tried before an Indian judge, one side or the other is in despair. For, though he were, in fact, a miracle of rectitude, he is expected to lean, in his verdict, to the side of his own creed, and nothing can persuade the litigant of the other faith that he will not do so.*

People go to law to get questions settled which they are not able to settle themselves. It is nothing but slander to say that if the case is to come before an Indian judge one side or the other is in despair. If they felt like that about it they would not go to law so frequently. The vast bulk of the magistrates and judges in India are Hindus and Muhammadans. I believe that among these men bribery is very rare.

Condescendingly, Miss Mayo nevertheless tells us that "The bench of India has been and is graced by *some* native judges of irreproachable probity.† But she spoils this by adding,

* *Ibid.*, p. 343.

† Italics mine.

"Yet the Indian is traditionally used to the judge who accepts a fee from either side in advance of the trial, feeling that probity is sufficiently served if, after the verdict, the fee of the loser is returned.* This is absolutely unsupported by evidence.

Next comes, "Bought witnesses are also a matter of course; you may see them to-day squatting before the court-house waiting to be hired!† Does Miss Mayo imagine that in cases where pleaders want to obtain false witnesses they leave it till the last minute and pick them up on the steps of the court-house? Besides, these professional witnesses would gradually become known in the court-houses they frequented. I think it shows Miss Mayo's method of constructing her book, that she should fly to the conclusion that because some people are sitting there they are waiting to be hired in this way.

In her next paragraph Miss Mayo tells us that in religious disputes between Hindu and Muhammadan the litigant is always anxious to obtain an English judge, because then he can be sure of impartiality, for "how shall any judge decide against his Gods?" Yet in the

* *Mother India*, pp. 343-4.

† *Ibid*, p. 343.

following paragraph she describes the decision of a Muhammadan District Magistrate of the United Provinces before whom were brought certain police officers of his district. "These men had grossly failed in their duty during certain religious riots, entailing thereby the death of several persons. They richly deserved a severe sentence. But they were Hindus. Therefore the judge, fearing the accusation of religious animosity, let them off with a sentence so light as to amount to an unjust award and an offence against the public service."* So that apparently sometimes, so far from it being a disadvantage to get a judge of the other religion to try your case it may be an advantage. Miss Mayo wants things both ways at once! Between these two views everything evens up, and results in what most of us who have had to do with causes at law know quite well, that these Indian judges are impartial and fair.

Quite apart from any religious disputes, Miss Mayo also draws our attention to the riots which occasionally occur. There have been some very horrible riots, but not many when one considers the vast extent of the country, and the existence of a hooligan

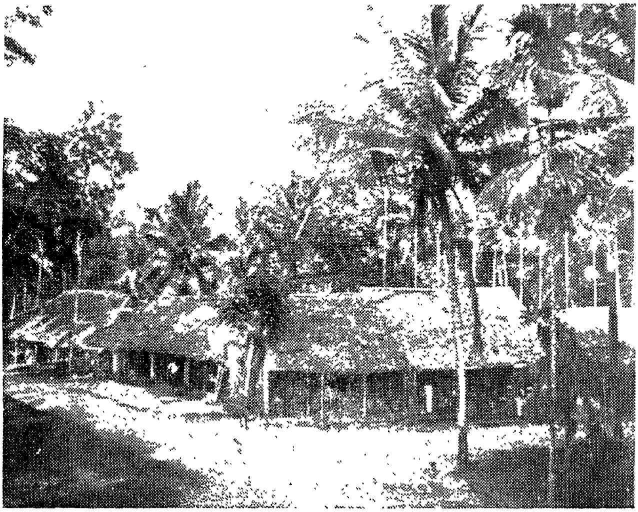
Ibid, p. 344

element here and there. She relates the incident at Chauri Chaura in Bengal, in which twenty-one constables and watchmen were attacked. She also mentions inflammatory posters exhibited in the Panjab. It was very difficult, even for those of us who were near to, but not in, the Panjab in 1919, to obtain accurate information from the Province, as everything was censored by the authorities. If those posters were anything more than mere chalk-marks made by irresponsible persons, they should be somewhere on exhibit before we are expected to believe that they really existed. I cannot enter into the whole question as to the Panjab disturbances of 1919. There were faults on both sides. The violence started by the police pushing some people who were going on a deputation. Some of these people were foolish enough to throw stones. The stone-throwing was followed by shooting by the police. The shooting was followed by an outbreak in Amritsar involving several murders, but which was soon quelled. Shortly after came the frank frightfulness of the Amritsar massacre, the crawling orders, and other such things.

Leading men who had never been violent at all, but had taken active interest in political

affairs, were dragged from their homes, made to look disreputable by having their clothes torn and coal dust thrown upon them, and were cast into jail without reason other than their interest in political matters. A friend of my own, a rich man, told me that he was dragged from his home in this way, his wife and children were turned into the streets to wander and there was a threat to other people who should assist them. This dreadful tale of woe need not be resuscitated now. I think we British people acknowledged our fault.

Experience shows me that the reports of the temper of Indian crowds which appear in the foreign press are usually too highly coloured. I was present at the great "All-Parties' Meeting" on the Madras beach on the evening of Sunday, April 27th, 1930. My estimate would be about a hundred thousand people, sitting on the sand in a great circle round the platform. They were all perfectly peaceful. About half way through, I left the meeting and went up on to the Marina or drive, and found there a curious sight. For a mile or more there were many people on the road, but just in one spot about twenty policemen armed with rifles were standing in a row, and opposite them there was an almost





Village Roads.

Page 388.





Village Scenes.

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equal row of men who appeared of a low type, who were hissing, shaking fists and abusing the policemen in the vernacular. Between these two rows there was barely room for a slow stream of motor-cars in single file. It struck me at the time that the gestures and manner of the abusers were almost amusingly mechanical. Beyond this little group, but still within about twenty paces of the policemen were some individuals who were ready to hiss at any passing European, and I received my share in that small area. But all the crowd which thronged the Marina for a great distance on either side were entirely peaceful and friendly. Later, on reaching home, I heard that there had afterwards been firing and baton charges and some stone-throwing in a side street.

In the Summer Session of the Legislative Assembly there were many speeches by both Muhammadans and Hindus in which the occasional riots were deeply deplored. We there find that all are seeking the same thing in India, a system which will show partiality to no special community, a recognition of the necessity for the co-operation of all in an effort for India's progress as a whole. A constitution proposed by Indians of all kinds in consul-

tation can alone provide a basis for this, and that is not lacking,

CHAPTER XXII

THE VILLAGES

> Pity them that ask thy pity; who art thou to stint thy hoard,
> When the holy moon shines equal on the leper and the lord?
>
> *Hitopadesa*

INDIA is a land of villages. In British India they number nearly half a million, each in its cluster of trees, dotted evenly over the land, like little flowers on printed muslin, and contain 89·8 per cent. of the entire population.

Miss Mayo speaks of these villages, scattered across the open country away from the Grand Trunk Road:

> Each just a handful of mud-walled huts clustered beside the hole they took the mud from, now half full of stagnant water in which they wash and bathe and quench their thirst. In villages such as these live nine-tenths of all the peoples of India. Hindu or Muhammadan alike—hardworking cultivators of the soil, simple, illiterate, peaceful, kindly.*

Ibid, p. 66.

This little picture has some charm, but I should like to point out that there are such things as wells in India. The water of wells is used for drinking, and in the main also for bathing and washing clothes, and very largely for irrigation of the fields.

The Hindus are fond of their villages. Even those who live in the towns still "belong" to villages. Every now and then a townsman disappears for a while, and if one asks what is happening the answer is: "He has gone to his village," or if you meet your friend after an interval you learn: "I have been to my village."

Here is my picture of a village. Roads of beaten earth, broad and open. No litter of newspapers or other rubbish. A sense of space and good-smelling earth. Old trees with platforms built round them, and here and there a little shrine, with stones carved with serpents and mystical designs. Little temples, with miniature pagodas, at one end dedicated to Shiva, at the other to Vishnu. Some people linger by the temple. They stand and talk, with flowers in their hands, backed by the red and white vertically striped temple walls. A priest is with them, wearing his trident-like caste mark, and two cloths, whiter than snow.

Houses, both sides of the road, and round the corner more houses, built of sun-dried brick plastered with clay and whitened with lime. Their roofs, of round dark red channel tiles, made by the potter.

We mount a verandah. A figure in the doorway; white cloths again, and snowy beard. A look of kindliness mingled with curiosity. "Come in. What is your desire? To see?" The entrance hall with its platform, for shaving, for gossip with a friend. The main room, with others on either side. Another door, a deep verandah all round a courtyard, a well at the centre. More rooms each side; behind, a dining-room, kitchen, stores. People everywhere, standing quietly aside, looking, curious—men and boys in white, women and girls in yellow, red and blue, toddling babies in nothing but a string and a brass leaf. In the courtyard a cow, a member of the family, having a name. Earthen pots, iron pots, brass pots, copper pots, shining like gold. A few cots and benches, and boxes for clothes.

Outside again. Round the streets. The smith, with his little fire, and bellows which force great heat. The potter twirling his table, dexterous hands moulding many shapes with magic charm and speed. Weaving. A long

warp stretched between two trees. The weaver bending over, straightening the threads. A clatter of looms somewhere near by. The school. Fifty children sitting round the walls, each reading his own lesson in a loud voice. The master, eagle-eyed, a playful twig in hand, listening to all, calling by name him or her who makes a mistake. A school for concentration, this. To the stream. The washerman and his family. Two donkeys near by. Slapping stones by the edge of the water. The swish and clap of wet cloths.

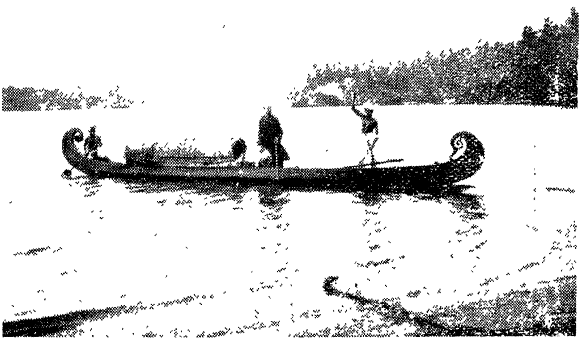
Evening. Cow-dust and tinkling bells. A little child leads the kine. Each knows its own house and in they go. Food. We sit round the walls, cross-legged, great plantain-leaves our plates. Mothers and sons ladle rice, soup, curried vegetables, dal, curds. Quaint cakes, salt and sweet. Guest talk. Music and song. Tiny lamps, temple music, spread mats, a little talk, and sleep.

The Indian villager is very poor to-day. Lord George Hamilton, while Secretary of State for India, in 1894, estimated the Indian income, per head, at £ 2 a year ; Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji estimated it at 20 rupees. At present it may be nearer £ 3. Mr. Irwin, a Deputy Commissioner in Oudh, found that 173 people

had only 10 blankets and 16 padded quilts among them. The small cultivators, he said, were always on the brink of want, and would go over it but for the money-lender. Mr. G. V. Joshi showed that the borrowings in the Deccan amounted to 93 per cent. of the total assessment. In Bombay 30 to 40 per cent. of the cultivators cannot get enough money to pay the land tax and feed their families even in good years, but must go to town and work as labourers to obtain it. Sir Charles Elliott, Settlement Officer and afterwards a Lieutenant-Governor, said: "I do not hesitate to say that half of our agricultural population never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied." Sir William Hunter, a Director-General of Indian Statistics, said that forty million Indians never at any time had enough to eat. Mr. S. S. Thorburn, Financial Commissioner of the Punjab, declared that "seventy millions of Indian peasants are in such a condition of hopeless poverty that no reform can do them any good." Professor Dayashankar Dubey has shown that "64·6 per cent. of the population lives always on insufficient food, getting only about 73 per cent. of the minimum requirement for maintaining efficiency. In other words,

two-thirds of the population always get only three-quarters of the amount of food-grains they should have."

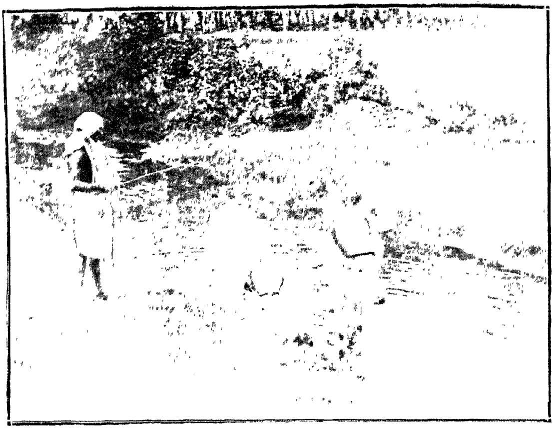
When we seek the cause of this poverty, and ask why it is increasing, we always come back to three persons—the landlord, the money-lender and the collector of taxes, who between them drain the wealth of the cultivators to the last drop. I am afraid it was our new method of land-holding and taxation which made this possible. In old times the land was held by the villagers, and the village council regulated the cultivation and distribution of crops. The king had his share in kind, unless the village wished to pay in cash. We established the private ownership of plots of land, also the system of collecting land tax in cash only, each plot of land being assessed a proportion of the probable yield. Sometimes it is difficult to convert crop into cash; this brings in the money-lender, whose standard charge is 12 per cent. This in turn leads to the sale of mortgaged holdings and the production of a large landless class of cultivators and another class of landlords, often absentee. In one report from the United Provinces it was stated that half the absentee landlords lived in Britain.

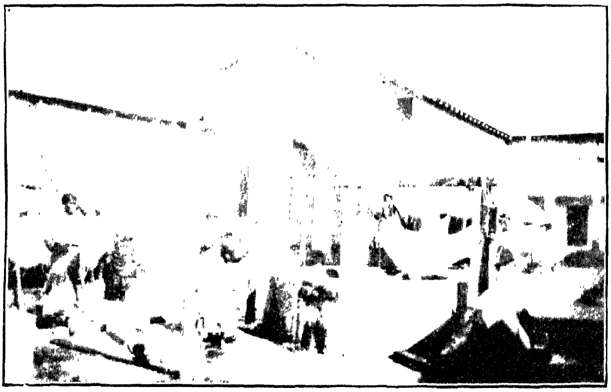




Waterside Marketing.

Page 396.





Streams and Wells

These conditions in their turn lead to the phenomena of (1) the "mortgaged" crop, (2) the depletion of the soil, and (3) "artificial famines." Professor Ganguli, speaking on *The Indian Rural Problem* in May 1925 showed that as the production is small and the means of transportation extremely inefficient (rural roads being very unsatisfactory) the grower can only reach the market-centres through several middlemen. In addition to this, generally the greater portion of the prospective crop is held in mortgage to the money-lender or trader. The disparity between the profits made by the brokers and dealers and the prices which the grower receives thus become so great that in all the market centres "money-lenders congregate like flies over jam", and they soon entangle the growers of the neighbourhood into permanent indebtedness. Professor Ganguli observed in a market near Calcutta that a certain quantity of jute fetched from 5½ to 6 rupees when "mortgaged" and from 8¾ to 9 rupees when "free". "Mortgaged" linseed brought from 1½ to 1¾ rupees, "free" linseed from 2½ to 2¾ rupees. "Mortgaged" grain was from 4½ to 5 rupees, and "free" grain from 6¾ to 7 rupees.

The Hon. Mr. A. Ranganatham, one of the

Ministers of Madras, speaking on the Indian village as it is, of which he knows much, having been for many years a Tahsildar and a Deputy Collector, explained with reference to one village well known to him:

> They have to pay their taxes while their crops are still in the fields, instead of waiting until they are harvested and the farmer can sell at a good price. So they are compelled to go to the money-lenders and borrow money at high rates of interest, or equally unfair terms. Very often they mortgage their crops in advance and undertake to sell these at some rate which is far lower than the prevailing market price, because of this short-sighted policy of the Government of insisting upon payment of the taxes in full before the raiyat can choose his time, and sell his crop at the most favourable rates to himself.
>
> This borrowing very often means that he has to go without the necessary sustenance in order to repay, or to carry on until, at some later state, he has again to borrow money, and again at higher rates of interest.

As a result of his poverty the peasant cannot put fertilizers into the soil, and the further result is that the soil is becoming more and more depleted all the time. In former

times the travellers remarked upon the extraordinary fertility of Indian soil, saying that it yielded in many places three crops a year, but that condition no longer obtains. The greater part of the cultivated land has been brought to its fertility level, and "the day of reckoning is not far."

The manufacture of a landless class of peasants dependent on wages paid for employment, which in turn is dependent on the resources of the often poor landholder, and even more upon the vagaries of the climate, is another factor in the production of "artificial famines". In the old days the villagers had their reserves, and if those ran out there were the royal granaries upon which to fall back. But now there are no reserves for the landless peasant, and upon the local failure of crops (that is, for him, of employment) or often even a serious threat of the same, there are no wages at all with which to buy any grain, however cheap. Therefore we find Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald writing: "Even in the worst times there is no scarcity of grain in the famine-stricken districts. At the very worst time in the Gujerat famine of 1900, it was shown by the official returns that there was sufficient grain to last for a couple of years in

the hands of the grain-dealers of the district. It is, therefore, not a scarcity of grain that causes famines. In recent times famine has been caused by a destruction of capital and the consequent cessation of the demand for labour. High prices coincide with low wages and unemployment, and people starve in the midst of plenty."*

Miss Mayo tells us, with childish sagacity, that "No man sells grain to-day that he needs to-day to put into his mouth."† There she is wrong. That is precisely what he does in India. He sells the grain to get money to pay his taxes and his money-lender, and often goes without the grain that ought to be in his mouth.

I do not wish to seem inappreciative of the splendid measures of famine relief organized by Government, in which railways play an important part, but after all, important and necessary as these are they are not enough, for they do not touch the root of the problem. They do not even provide for all cases where fodder is seriously required, as I know from personal experience, as during a considerable

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**The Awakening of India*, J. Ramsay Macdonald, p. 163.

†*Mother India*, p. 394.

fodder famine in the north of the Bombay Presidency some years ago I bought a quantity of cows (worth normally from 150 to 250 rupees each) for 5 rupees each, in order to save them from death with what fodder I could get.

That railways do not constitute the solution of the problem of famine is shown by the fact that the worst famines on record occurred in the nineties of last century, when there were already many railways. In 1901 when a telegram appeared in the newspapers advising the recurrence of famine in one part of India, it was at the same time reported that the first shiploads of Indian wheat had just left Bombay. But even if all these exports were entirely prohibited there would still be insufficient food, for, as Professor Ganguli has shown, there has been for several years past on the average a yearly deficit of about 10.3 million tons of food-grains and pulses. Famine is now chronic in India,* although of all countries she stands third in the shipment of foods to Europe.

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*The *Lancet* of May 16, 1901 has the following from its Indian special correspondent: "It is estimated that there were 20,000,000 more deaths than there should have been, and if we put 1,000,000 deaths down to plague, there remain 19,000,000 that can be attributed either to actual starvation or diseases therefrom." This refers to one decade.

There is no utility in being theoretical in these matters. As one speaker pointed out, present conditions may represent modern political economy, but if so in this case it is pure idiocy. "India if wisely governed may be a paradise, but with five fools you can turn a paradise into a hell."

Therefore there is no use in Miss Mayo's regarding the poor Indians' debt as an asset, and once more remarking with childish sagacity: "The assumption that debt is due to poverty cannot be entertained. Debt is due to credit, and credit depends upon prosperity and not poverty."* We may assume then that the enormous war debt of Great Britain is a measure of her wealth, on the ground that the money would not have been lent otherwise. Yes, but that credit would consist of the labor of unborn millions of Englishmen and Englishwomen, who would have to work for those to whom the debt was owing. Why should anybody want to be a creditor? Only because he would like to take part of the fruit of somebody else's labour. I know there is a vast amount of illusion in money matters. I know too, by actual observation, the desperate poverty that exists in Indian villages, not-

*Mother India, p. 401.

withstanding the theoretical wealth which their indebtedness is here supposed to imply.

This is hardly the place to go into the question as to what should be done. My business is mainly to describe the conditions, and if possible the causes. But we may perhaps observe that the most urgent requirements are co-operative credit societies, village councils or *panchayats*, and village communal works.

Each of these movements has been developing in recent years. There are now nearly 70,000 credit societies, issuing loans for something approaching 350 million rupees, and having over 3 million members, who in the Bombay Presidency amount to one-tenth of the householders. State aid is given to the extent of about one per cent. of the working capital.

It should not be a difficult matter for the Indians to get back in their rural organizations, under some scheme of their own, to systems of village development which will not involve dependence upon outside money-lenders and financiers. Lord Ronaldshay, ex-Governor of Bengal, seems to agree with this idea, and to approve of the re-establishment of village government by panchayat. He criticizes the

way in which the Englishman insists upon forcing his own often unsuitable institutions upon any country in which he has authority. He quotes Emerson, who said that "the Englishman sticks to his traditions and usages, and, so help him God, he will force his Island by-laws down the throat of great countries like India, China, Canada, Australia." And adds: "It must be admitted that, in deciding upon the type of local authority to be established in India, the authorities of the day went a long way towards justifying that somewhat caustic criticism."*

Further on Lord Ronaldshay speaks of the unsuitability of the particular type of village government which we have instituted, and says that Local Self-Government would have led to more satisfactory progress. It is now difficult to restore the village councils to their proper status, for the steps which have been taken in various parts of India in recent years to establish Village Self-Governing bodies have been handicapped by the prior existence of District and Local Boards, so that instead of being the foundation of the whole edifice, they have had to be tacked on to the already existing institutions, and difficulty has con-

**India; A Bird's Eye View*; p. 126.

sequently been experienced in fitting them into the general scheme.*

Further on Lord Ronaldshay tells us that: "It was not until 1919 that a special Act known as the Bengal Village Self-Government Act was passed with the object of placing Union Boards as far as possible upon a sound statutory basis, and of providing for the creation of Village Courts and Benches. This salutary return in the direction of the ancient indigenous system is breathing new life into Local Self-Government."†

As to some of the practical work in a village Lord Ronaldshay wrote:

> A small tax known as the Chaukidari Tax for the unkeep of the village police is a compulsory levy; but under the Village Self-Government Act, a Union Board may impose additional taxation to enable it to undertake various works for the benefit of the villages. I was shown the accounts. The Board, though of recent creation, had imposed additional taxation amounting to a quarter of the Chaukidari Tax. Did the villagers object? I asked. At first, yes; but it was explained that the Board wanted the money for the construction of

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**Ibid.*, pp. 139-40.

†*Ibid.*, p. 189.

certain wells. Now, above all things, the villagers wanted wells, for a supply of good drinking water was a long-felt want. They would see what the Board could do.

The Board, it seemed, did very well; and during the coming year the rate of taxation was to be doubled for further improvements. Presently I saw the wells, excellent circular shafts, lined with brick, some feet in diameter, and with a neat coping round the top. The cost had been Rs. 300—£ 20—per well, and neither the District Board nor any other agency, I was told, could construct such wells for less than double the sum; for the village had done the work itself; the Chairman of the Board had kept the accounts and done all the clerical work; a member of the Board had supervised construction; the labor had come from the village itself. There had been, in fact, no middleman charges, and the village had got the full value of every rupee spent.

The year before, twenty-five of the Boards in the District had raised no revenue by taxation other than that of the Chaukidari Tax; this year all but fourteen of the one hundred and thirty Union Boards which had been established within the area had levied additional rates.

The trial of petty criminal cases and civil

suits was a function of the guilds of ancient India, and the experimental establishment of Village Courts and Benches under the Act of 1919 met with immediate success. In the year 1921, 652 criminal cases and 2,218 civil suits were instituted before fourteen such Courts and Benches.*

It would seem, therefore, that the village is still the fundamental unit in the communal life of India; and it is worth noting in passing, as significant of the feelings of the village population, that at a recent Conference of representatives of Union Boards in the Dacca District, a proposal was put forward for discussion for the abolition of District Boards. More significant still, the proposal was carried.†

The case for establishing such village councils advances constantly. New *Panchayats* to the number of 29 were constituted in the Punjab alone the year before last.

In the old days there was much public

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*I read recently in an Indian paper of a village in which the ***panchayat*** was established, and in the course of a year they had not one single case brought up in the criminal or the civil court of the village. This was no doubt largely because local justice can be administered with swiftness and accuracy, since the judges and others can easily discover the truth.

†***Ibid.***, pp. 144-8.

spirit in the villages of India, based on community ownership of the land. If a king gave a *jaghir* or grant of land, it meant only that he gave the crops on that land, which would otherwise have gone to himself as part of his share. The villagers used to give their free labour to improve the village; roads, temples, tanks, wells, public buildings and vast systems of water channels were provided in this way.

In the State of Mysore the Government encourages such communal efforts. The villagers give voluntary labour to the construction of school buildings, wells, tanks and other works. This labour is calculated at ordinary wage rates, and the Government then makes an equal grant with which the village can purchase materials. For details of this work the *Administration Report* of Mysore may be consulted. With the re-establishment of village prosperity and the development of a large number of Indian industries there would come very shortly the development of education, popular literature, roads free of tolls, and new transport facilities, and very soon there would be a great decline in old customs, such as child-marriage and caste divisions, which belong to a condition comparable with the

Middle Ages in Europe, and have everywhere disappeared where modern prosperity has grown.

CHAPTER XXIII

INDUSTRIES

> Give, and it shall swell thy getting; give, and thou shall safer keep;
> Pierce the tank-wall; or it yieldeth, when the water waxes deep.
>
> *Hitopadesa*

"THE welfare of any people, we are wont to agree, must finally rest upon economic foundations" declares Miss Mayo.* She should have said "of any free people." It could not have been said of the serfs of Russia, or the slaves of old Greece and Rome. It applies, through adaptation to circumstances, when free relations are involved. It applies in a country when the Government rules entirely and solely with the economic welfare of the permanent inhabitants in view. These conditions we must admit have not obtained in India for a long time.

Many historians tell us of the busy,

**Mother India*, p. 389.

thriving industries of India of two centuries or even one century ago. Orme wrote : "On the coast of Coromandel and in the province of Bengal it is difficult to find a village in which every man, woman and child is not employed in making a piece of cloth." In the time of Akbar, "wherever a European penetrated inland, he found cloth being produced all along his route."* Thus great varieties of muslins, chintzes, calicoes, table cloths, basinets, ginghams, long cloths, etc., many of them beautifully dyed as well as exquisitely made, were produced by the Indians for their own use and for export to other countries.

These hand industries were undertaken by agriculturists in the between times of their outdoor work, and constituted an important economic factor. They have now largely disappeared, but a corresponding development of factories has not taken place in India, as it has in Britain, to compensate for the change. The cause of this is not difficult to understand.

Britain developed her leading position in the world largely with the aid of India. She found in India a great cotton industry. Her agriculturists soon adopted the practice of cotton spinning and weaving in their leisure

**India at the Time of Akbar,* W. H. Moreland.

time, and developed it as a great cottage industry on the lines on which it already existed in India. This trade materially increased the wealth of Britain, especially a little later when the invention of ginning, spinning and weaving machinery increased the output and lowered the price of cotton goods manufactured in England. Trevelyan, the historian, said that this trade was " the hidden reef on which Napoleon's empire struck." It was the salvation of Britain.

To develop her own cotton trade Britain put taxes on the import of the Indian goods into England,* so as to lessen those imports. At times she made the importation of some of the Indian-made cloths a penal offence, so as to close the English market altogether against them. For thirty years she also paid bounties of from 10 to 20 per cent. on the export of British printed cottons.

*Amounting in 1813 (a critical time for Indian education, agriculture and industries) to 44 per cent. on flowered and stitched muslins, 85 per cent. on calicoes and dimities, and 81 per cent. on manufactured (not raw) cotton. As a result, between 1814 and 1835 Indian cotton goods imported into Britain fell from one and one-fourth millions to less than one-third of a million pieces, while British piece goods exported to India rose from less than 1 million yards to nearly 52 million yards.

The Indians were not slow to adopt modern machinery for the manufacture of cotton goods, though naturally the British importer got into the Indian market extensively before that took place. The growth of Indian mills was then delayed by a duty imposed as late as 1894 on all cotton goods manufactured by machinery instead of by hand in India.* The foreign merchant had to buy his cotton abroad, transport it to his own country, make it up there, and bring it to India, paying a trifling customs' duty. In order that he might not be at too great a disadvantage in the competitive market of India, it was necessary to impose this countervailing excise duty. In England the invention of power machinery caused riots, but the people soon adapted themselves to the new factory system. They were not so allowed to adapt themselves in India but were forced to depend entirely on the land—this is one of the reasons why they have become so desperately poor.†

*Miss Mayo merely alludes to this form of protection turned upside down as "the old excise duty on Indian-milled cotton goods—an imposition which no Briton to-day defends" (*Mother India*, p 390.) She does not tell us that it was removed only three years ago.

†H. H. Wilson in his ***History of India*** writes: "It

It is not under such circumstances that the Japanese have developed their industries in recent years, or that the United States of America has converted herself within the last fifty or sixty years from a predominantly agricultural country into an industrially balanced and prosperous country. On the contrary, Government when necessary has assisted the industries with bounties and protective tariffs.

One does not blame the English merchants

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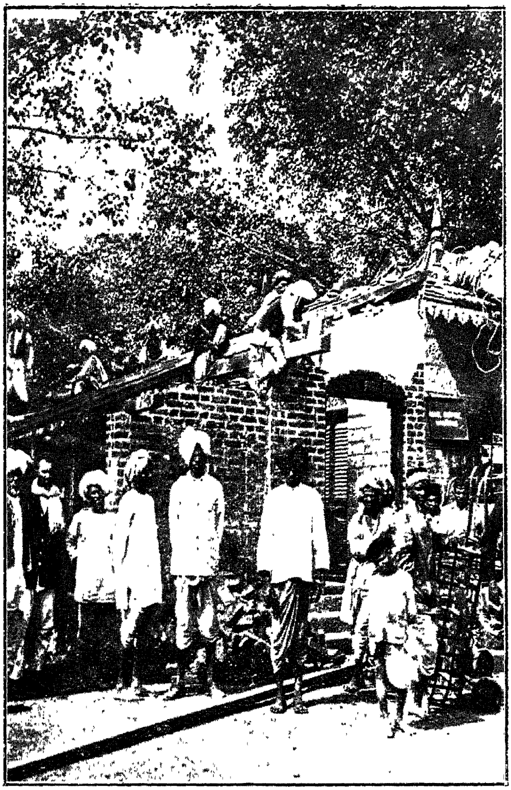
was stated in evidence (1813) that the cotton and silk goods of India up to that period could be sold for a profit in the British market at a price from 50 to 60 per cent. lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 and 80 per cent. on their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitory duties and decrees existed, the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped in their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion, even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of Indian manufacturers. Had India been independent, she would have retaliated, would have imposed prohibitive duties upon British goods, and would thus have preserved her own productive industry from annihilation. This act of self-defence was not permitted her; she was at the mercy of the stranger. British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms."

for using all the standard methods of competition, nor for carrying them to extreme lengths whenever there has been danger of their losing their grip on the Indian market. But one acknowledges that in this matter we have not ruled India for India's good.

The lengths to which such competition can go are shown in an account given by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore in *My Reminiscences*. He relates there an attempt made by his brother to found a ferry service on the river Hooghli under Indian management. The British company already established had not sufficient faith in the incompetence and unbusinesslike methods of the Hindus (of which Europeans talk so much) to allow that Indian company to die a natural death. On the contrary they leaped to their guns, fearing the Indian rivalry in that branch of trade. Fares were lowered first on one line, then on the other, and so on until you could travel across that river free. Further, the competition came to such a pitch that you could have free refreshments on board while so travelling. The Hindu funds for carrying on the business in the face of this sort of competition were too limited, so their ferry service came to a speedy end.

The result of these conditions is that, out of the huge population of India, the number of people employed a few years ago in factories of various kinds was only: (in thousands) textiles 558, mines 224, transport 125, foods 74, metals 71, glass and earthenware 49, chemical products 49, and luxuries 45. To-day organized industry occupies less than 1 per cent. of the population. Conditions and hours of labour are bad. It was a great advance when the Indian Factories Act of 1922 limited the hours of adults employed in factories to 60 a week and 11 a day, and children below 12 were excluded. The present weekly limit at the mines is 54 hours underground, and 60 hours above.

Some years ago Mr. G. K. Gokhale, speaking to an English audience, pointed out the consequences of the unequal battle between the foreign giant industries and the Indian infant efforts. He showed that the average income in England was £ 42 per head, while in India it was at the highest estimate £ 2. The paid-up capital of joint stock companies in Britain was nearly £ 2,000 millions, but that of India was only £ 26 millions, and the greater part of that was European. Is it a matter for wonder that Indians who have a little



Indian Builders.

Page 416. *Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.*



Village Industry.

Page 417. *Underwood & Underwood, N. Y.*

capital are slow to embark it upon commercial ventures ?*

This is the solution of the mystery of India's bullion. Miss Mayo points out that a large quantity of treasure passes into India every year, and, as far as commercial use is concerned, disappears. A large part of the gold and silver goes into jewellery, which is worn by the women. Many of the money-lenders and others who happen to have a surplus probably keep a hidden hoard, against the danger which may overwhelm our present civilization in India. As to the balance of trade, I cannot do better than quote the figures given by Mr. H. M. Hyndman, who was an authority on Indian economics :

> Under pre-war conditions the total amount of exports by sea of private merchandise of Indian products from British India and the Native States together for the five years 1909-10 to 1913-14 was £ 731,657,602, or an average of £ 146,331,530 a year. The total amount of imports by sea of private merchandise during the same period of five years was £ 486,157,310. Here is a difference of not less than £ 245,000,000

* It was estimated recently by a writer in the *Financial Times* that British investments in joint stock companies registered in India now amount to about £ 75 millions.

between the exports and imports of private merchandise, or a yearly disparity of £49,000,000 without return in the form of merchandise, although the imports of 1912-13 and 1913-14 reached the exceptional figures of £ 107,000,000 and £ 122,000,000 respectively. Against this extraordinary discrepancy the almost equally remarkable import of treasure, ranging from £ 25,000,000 to as high as £ 41,000,000 in the years under consideration, is naturally put forward by official apologists for India's desperate poverty. But the Government of India has always refused to make any distinction between the exports and imports of the Native States and those of British India. I am quite confident that at least half of the imported treasure, as well as a great deal more than their proportional part of the import of merchandise, goes into these Native States. The yearly drain from British India of commercial products, for which there is no commercial return I put at upward of £ 30,000,000 a year.*

Miss Mayo makes much of the railways of India. There is still much room, however, for improvement, not merely in mileage, but especially in the provision of wagons and coaches. At the end of March 1924, India had

*_The Economic Basis in India_, by H. M. Hyndman.

a total length of 38,039 miles of open system.* This gives us 21 miles per thousand square miles of territory, as compared with 88 in the United States. Since India's population is about six times as dense as that of America, it will be seen that it is served relatively by only one twenty-fourth of America's railway facilities, assuming that there are the same number of trains per day over each mile of line, which is not the case by a long way. Often enough, there are only two passenger trains per day between the biggest towns, where there may be twenty trains a day in America.

If, then, every mile of Indian railway carries twice the value of goods which an American mile carries (which is not quite the case) it means only one-twelfth the turnover *per capita* of the population.

It is pointed out that the number of passengers carried per mile of open railway in India is 15,834, while in the United States it is 3,550. Assuming that two trains per day pass through the Indian mile, while ten trains per day pass along the American mile, and that approximately 5 times the number of Indian passengers go over the mile (as the figures show) it means that the Indian trains

***Statistical Abstract*, p. 413.

are 25 times as crowded as the American trains, assuming them to be of the same size, which they are not!

We also see from these figures that there are 15,834 Indian travellers where there are 14,200 (4 × 3,550) Americans. As the Indian population is nearly three times as great we see that there are only a little more than one-third as many travellers in India as in America in proportion to the population. (This does not allow for the immense amount of automobile traffic in America). What then becomes of the fancy statement that railway travelling is the Indians' "movie show", the idea that they merely entertain themselves by riding to and fro? If the Indian railways carry "four and a half times as many passengers per mile of steel as did the railways of the United States,"* it is because there are not as many miles as there ought to be, and because there is great over-crowding.

Miss Mayo tells us that the money for building Indian railways was borrowed in London at rates from 2½% to 5%, with an average of 3½% on the loans. There was a time, I suppose everybody knows, when that was all you could expect on railway invest-

*_Mother India_, p. 392.



A Carpenter and His Work.

Page 420.



Carrying Coal.

Page 421. *Underwood & Underwood, N.Y.*

ments, which were generally considered very safe. India borrowed in the open market; nobody was making donations or concessions in this matter. Though truly, as Miss Mayo says, interest on such a loan cannot be regarded as an unreasonable drain on India, it is a sad thing that economic conditions should have made it necessary to raise the entire capital abroad. There is a complaint that the Indian money-lenders would not back these loans. That is not to be expected, when they can extract 12% compound interest from the poor farmer, and have the security of his lands and house and crops.

I hope I have established the fact that the lack of industrial enterprise in a country richly endowed with an enormous variety of easily accessible and valuable raw materials is not due to the personal inertia of the people of the country, though I admit that there may be a strain of over-caution developed on account of the causes just enumerated.

CHAPTER XXIV

TAXATION AND EXPENDITURE

No one is the friend of another,
No one is the enemy of another,
Friends as well as enemies
Are produced by our transactions.

Panchatantra

OFFICIAL estimates of the average annual income per head of the people of India put it some years ago at 30 rupees, or £ 2. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji put it at 20 rupees. Mr. William Digby offered strong evidence that it was not more than 17½ rupees. Out of this the taxation was 3s. 7½d. per head. I mention this in British money for purposes of comparison with the taxation of the Briton, whose income had been put at £ 33 per head, while his taxation was about £ 2 10s. 0d. From these figures it will be seen that while Britons paid about 8 per cent. Indians were paying about 14 per cent. Indians pay out of their poverty, while the English pay out of their relative wealth.

In 1910 the land tax was 1s. 8d. per head, a little less than one half of the total. This land tax has sometimes been described as "rent". That is not in accord with Indian tradition. Why should the village cultivator pay "rent" to somebody else, when he is cultivating the land which he and his ancestors have occupied for thousands of years? When Akbar collected a portion of the crop it is called a tax—and for a long time it was the only tax—but when the present Government collects it some economists want to call it rent. Words do not matter much, of course; the fact is that the cultivator pays generally some 30 per cent. on his gross production (not on his net income or profit). If the amount proves to be small it is because the production is small. Proportionately to net income the taxation of India is large.

At present the land tax is about 16 per cent. of the total taxation. The percentages of other leading sources of revenue are customs, 22; salt, 6; opium and liquor, 17; railways, 15; income-tax, 9. Much of this bears directly on the poor.

Two questions then arise: is it necessarily so big, and is it spent to the advantage of India? There is no objection to taxation any-

where if the money is spent wisely and among the tax-payers as far as possible, but in India this is not the case, for about one-half is sent out of the country.* Besides, it need not necessarily be so large, for the cost of the army and of the administration is very great according to Indian standards.

Miss Mayo brings forward an imaginary discussion with an Indian reformer on the subject of the army:

> " The army is too big," says the politician.
>
> " Is it too big for the work it has to do in keeping your safety and peace ?"
>
> " I don't know, I have not looked into that," is the usual reply. " But anyway, it costs an outrageous percentage of India's revenue."

This is unfair, for the Indians have been discussing this question for years. They maintain that they could keep an army of the same size as ours at much less cost. At present one-third of the soldiers and nearly all the officers are British. It is economically unsound to keep a great branch of national life thus practically closed to national talent. Also the pay required by Indian officers and men would be less than that which must be paid to the British. The British officer in the

*_Mother India_, p. 395.

Indian Army may often live beyond his salary, but he buys most of his clothes and many other things abroad, and he has to keep his wife and children in Europe or in the hills. And when he retires he lives abroad, while drawing a large pension from the Indian revenues.* Then there is also the cost of transportation of troops. Mr. Sarkar said that in 1910 more than 13,800 European soldiers came out to India, and some 12,000 were returned. India has to pay over three-quarters of the transportation expenses. She forms the chief training ground for the British army, keeping on a war footing, thirty to forty battalions of infantry, besides cavalry, artillery and air forces.

Quite apart from this, the Indians have long wanted to set up a system of national volunteers on an extensive scale, somewhat on the lines of the British Territorials. This has not been permitted for fear of rebellion.

Under these circumstances it is mean to taunt the Indians (as many do) with being unable to defend their own country in case the British suddenly withdrew. It is adding insult to injury. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald wrote

We spend far too much of the income of India

* Out of 3,200 officers only 107 are Indians.

> on Imperial purposes and far too little on Indian development. On the whole, I think two charges can be substantiated against us. Our Government is extravagant, and we have behaved meanly to India. We charge the Indian tax-payer with the cost of the Indian office in Whitehall—even with the cost of building it; we would never think of making such a charge against our colonies; India has to pay for Aden, and for Imperial embassies into different parts of Asia; but the depth of meanness was touched when we tried to charge India with £ 7,000, the cost of the representatives and guests from India who took part in the coronation ceremonies of the late king.*

Mr. W. M. Torrens, a member of Parliament, is even more scathing in his judgment:

> Misrule cannot exist without an overgrown army, and wasteful military expenditure cannot live but by misrule. From first to last the policy of conquest and confiscation has implied and required not only an amount of force which good government would not have wanted, but an amount of jobbing, under the pretense and name of military expenditure, which good government would under no circumstances have needed or allowed. Wholly apart from the

*_The Awakening of India_, p. 148.

enormous drain upon the profits of Indian industry in the form of emoluments hoarded and husbanded for private use at home, the resources of the country have systematically been exhausted for the pay and keep of an excessive military establishment, of which a great portion has at all times been European.*

It is pointed out in response to such criticisms that on the other hand India has an enormous and extremely vulnerable coast line, which without extra cost to her is defended by the British fleet.† The British fleet also defends other parts of the Empire, but without demanding their surrender of self-rule

**Empire in Asia*, p. 412. Miss Mayo tells us that "equipment and stores, by order, are bought in India, whenever Indian firms can provide them in suitable quality and at a reasonable competitive price. Otherwise they are bought abroad, by the High Commissioner for India stationed in London, who is himself an Indian." (*Mother India*, p. 397.) This is an innovation since the Reforms. It is thus on a level with the removal of the countervailing excise duty on cotton goods, which "no Englishman now defends."

An Indian newspaper of recent date says: "The Government of India is unable to resist the pressure from London, and in spite of a Stores Purchase Department in this country and a High Commissioner to look after Indian interests in London, no less than 77 per cent. of our stores are purchased from Britain. Even this has led to protests in the House of Commons!"

†*Mother India*, p. 396.

in return for that. In 1927 the Indian Navy Bill was passed through both Houses of Parliament in London. The Indian Legislative Assembly refused to pass the Indian Navy Bill in March 1928, because its provisions were that India should pay for it even when it was used for other than Indian defence, and as one member said in the House of Commons: "No case can be made for an Indian Navy which is not under the control of the Indian people." There is also a dispute about the admission of Indians to the Covenanted Service in this arm. In the Royal Indian Marine there are 9 posts of Captains, 25 Commanders, 21 Lieutenant-Commanders, 29 Lieutenants, 9 Midshipmen, 9 Engineer Commanders, 25 Engineer Lieutenant-Commanders, 11 Boatswains, all British—not even one Indian.

When we are considering the benefits derived by India from the existence of the British fleet let us remember also that the Indian army is a protection to the greater part of the Empire, always ready to spring into action not only in India, but also wherever soldiers are wanted by the Empire, in Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Persia, East and South Africa, Singapore, China and many other places, even to far away Australia and New Zealand.

Here and there throughout "Mother India" the question of frontier defence has been raised. In one place Miss Mayo writes: "India possesses 1,400 miles of constantly dangerous frontier, always actively threatened and three times in the last century ablaze with open war."* I suppose no one will make the mistake of thinking that the frontier is threatened all along its length.

A few miles west of Peshawar, in the extreme north-west, is little Jamrud, place of ancient ruins, the starting point of the new railway through the world-famous Khyber Pass, through the independent territory between India and Afghanistan, to a station a short distance within that veiled land, next to Tibet and Abyssinia perhaps the most inaccessible and secluded country in the world. Railways may and do come to its borders, here and further south at New Chaman, beyond Quetta, in British Baluchistan, but here they end. Were it not so, we might have a continuous route by rail or motor road from Western Europe through Berlin, Moscow and Tashkand or Khiva and Bokhara through Termice, to which the railway already extends at the northern Afghan border. From that

*Ibid., p. 396.

border it is less than three hundred miles to the British railway and roads which run down through the Khyber Pass.

It is not possible in a book like this to go fully into the great Afghan question. Nadir Khan has been elected King of Afghanistan, and his policy is declared to be to modernise the country, not by the ridiculous method adopted by King Amanullah, of forcing his people to wear European dress, but by building railways and opening up relations with neighbouring countries.

We do not know whether the Amir ever will again attempt to extend his dominions to the Indus. Who can tell? But history shows us one simple fact, that in ancient times India was again and again invaded through the Khyber Pass, though sometimes there may have been intervals of hundreds of years between such invasions. Therefore a strong army and especially a strong air force must be stationed at this frontier by whatever government of India there may be, until such time as the nations agree to submit their difficulties to a world court instead of to the arbitrament of arms.

In all these matters common sense, not alarmism, must direct our thoughts. There

are splendid regiments of great fighters in the Indian army—Sikhs and Gurkhas, Mahrattas and Rajputs, and great numbers of Madrasis, such as those who showed their heroism in the boats which crossed over to Kut. Truly, Indians have not to any extent been admitted to commissioned rank in the Indian army, but they can soon be trained, and besides, the Princes have their armies. Officers and men from abroad also might be engaged. If England marched out of India, as Miss Mayo so frequently suggests, there would still be Englishmen prepared to serve in India. Surely great India, full of heroic fighters, can if necessary throw some of the best of her millions up into the frontier and hold back those tribesmen from the north. But wars of the future will be different from wars of the past—that is all we can predict.

Frontier raids, which were very frequent ten years ago, are now rare, on account of our new policy of bringing economic benefit by the building of roads, and the employment of tribesmen to look after them. This has proved much better than the old punitive expeditions, which achieved nothing permanent.

Let us return from the question of frontier defence to that of excessive expenditure. This

comes out again in connection with the civil administration. Dr. J. T. Sunderland has stated that 8,000 European officials in India draw yearly salaries totalling £ 13,930,554, while 130,000 Indians also in the Civil Service receive only £ 3,284,163. Therefore Sir M. Visvesvarayya declared that the unhappy people of India have "to support one of the costliest administrations of the world." It cannot be argued that this huge amount must be paid for the superior ability that can thus be obtained, because that is far from being the case. India has plenty of men of ability and character.

Miss Mayo points out that we could not expect the British officials to work at a lower rate than they do. That is perfectly true. She says that it was necessary to offer good pay to get good men to take on the job, for

> India, to-day, is a costly place to live in, as any sojourner will find. She is not a white man's country, in the sense that she frequently robs him of his health if not of his life. In committing himself to her service he must resign all home associations and privileges for long periods of time. If he marries he must part early with his children, and maintain them separated from their parents by a journey three weeks long. When he retires, after

twenty-five to thirty-five years of active service, his pension of £ 1,000 per annum loses 25 per cent. by taxes.*

All this is true, but why should such an artificial arrangement be preserved, and why should the white man fight for these posts? The answer is that there is a great deal of unemployment in England among all classes of people, and there is a big section that cannot afford to let this source of employment go out of their hands. They are holding on as long as possible, and forming a section of those who work to delay Indian Home Rule. Those who are in office are certainly a splendid body of men, as all agree, but there are Indians also, ready and eager to do their work on less than half their pay.

The extent of expenditure on the army and civil service is shown in the following brief statement made by Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald:

> We take in land revenue £ 20,000,000 per annum, £ 3,000,000 from salt, £ 11,000,000 from customs and excise, and have a net income of a little under £ 50,000,000 and a gross one of over £ 70,000,000. On the other side of the account we spend on army and military works,

Ibid., p. 398.

not including strategic railways, a sum which is just short of £ 20,000,000 ; it costs £ 60,000,000 to collect revenue, and we spend about £ 19,000,000 in England not including the cost of stores for railways and irrigation works.*

The Awakening of India, p. 142.

CHAPTER XXV

THE REFORMS AND THE FUTURE

But there is neither East nor West,
  Border, nor Breed, not Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face
  Tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

Kipling

IN December 1927 the Indian National Congress passed a resolution that "This Congress declares the goal of the Indian people to be complete national independence." This declaration came only after many years of request, of hope, of hesitancy. It marked a degree of bitterness of a wide-spread character not known before. The psychological moment had come. The feelings of India at large began to contain an element of irreconcilability to the British people and the Empire, although as late as May 1925, such a prominent and extreme leader as Mr. C. R. Das could say, in his Presidential address to the Bengal

Provincial Conference, "No nation can live in isolation. Dominion Status, while it affords complete protection to each constituent composing the great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire, secures to each the right to realise itself, develop itself and fulfil itself......Therefore it expresses all the elements of Swaraj......To me the idea is specially attractive, because of its deep spiritual significance. I believe in world-peace, in the ultimate federation of the world......The great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire—if properly led, is bound to make a lasting contribution to the great problem that awaits statesmen, the problem of knitting the world into the greatest federation the mind can conceive, the federation of the human race......Independence to my mind is a narrower ideal than Swaraj."

The 1928 Congress demanded Dominion Status before the end of 1929. The 1929 Congress once more voted for complete independence, and signified its intention to support Mr. Gandhi in his new schemes for forcing the issue by boycott of foreign cloth and by civil disobedience. These resolutions cannot be treated as a matter of more words, for the Congress makes a great appeal to the

masses, as well as to the educated classes. It is also quite automatically creating a new generation of young politicians, who have a more direct outlook and a less timid purpose than their elders.

Even now the Indians are not in favour of violence, but their next great wave of boycott of British goods may be complete, and when British trade in India is dead may pave the way for other boycotts of a still more far-reaching kind. And although even yet there are many Indian people who do not approve of Independence, but prefer Dominion Status, and although these fear the consequences in civil life, even under Home Rule, of the practice of civil disobedience now, even these people are steadily deserting to the more extreme section as time goes on, as Britain pursues her policy of delay. Among them all one can scarcely find a person who does not favour the boycott (except for fear of personal loss) and who does not wish success to Mr. Gandhi's cause.

There have long been, roughly speaking, three political parties in British India—two extremes, and one in the middle. So far, the two extremes have excited each other; each causing the other to swing further and further from the middle line. In each there is an

element of the fanatical, ready to gain its ends at the expense if necessary of standard social rules and rights. So far also the middle party has always stepped in and saved the situation by securing for India some degree of progress in political power. This occurred twenty years ago in the form of the Minto-Morley Reforms, and again in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. But now the country shows a new and more extreme mood, which was reflected also in the boycott of the Simon Commission, in which middle and extreme parties, Provincial Councils and even the Legislative Assembly all joined.

Miss Mayo tells us that the Reforms of 1919 were instituted by the British out of gratitude for the splendid way in which India rallied to the Empire during the World War. It was splendid in every way. The political leaders of the country used constantly to tell the people that it would be wrong to take advantage of Britain's embarrassment to try to compel her to give more liberty to India. Instead of responding to this spirit, however, Britian immediately after the war pursued an alarmist policy full of repression, culminating in the Rowlett Act and other extreme measures, which continued in time of peace the executive

rule which was justifiable only in time of war.

By reaction this gave birth to the full power of Mr. Gandhi's extremist movement, and on the other side caused the alarmists and ultra-conservative British element to experiment with terrorism, as at Amritsar. Be it remembered to the honour of the Government in India and the British Government that they, through the mouthpiece of Mr. Churchill, censured the action of the General who was responsible for those dreadful incidents, though unfortunately some private British agencies considerably spoiled the effect by acclaiming him a hero and presenting him with a sum of money. The effect of the shooting at Amritsar was to set India on fire with zeal for Home Rule. It destroyed at one stroke the smiles which British people were wont to see on their approach to an Indian village.

Each extreme reacted upon the other and intensified it to such an extent that if the Reforms of 1919 had not come in, I think we should have had a state of revolution similar to that which existed a few years ago in Ireland. Even as it was, the world knows with what indignant rejection the Reforms

vere met by a very large section of the ndians. They declared in emphatic terms hat the new Act was absolutely inadequate, nd that it involved once more a breach of the romises made in the days of the East India Company and later by Queen Victoria herself, nd a continuance of the scheme of things vhich had already reduced India to dreadful ooverty.

They stated that as long as India was governed from London, fundamental Indian uestions would not receive fair treatment. In Parliament in London it is not usual for all he members to be always present. Obviously hat would not be practicable. The members ttend in the main for those things in which hey have a special interest. It was declared o be notorious that when Indian questions vere brought up in the House of Commons he attendance was very poor. Most of the nembers felt that they knew little or nothing bout them, and their constituents were not nterested in them. Under such circumstances nembers who did attend were for the most part hose who had an axe to grind in India, or whose constituents or friends drove them o it for their own reasons, which would usually be connected with trade or other affairs

in which there was a personal interest. How could India under these circumstances be properly governed from England?*

The ultra-conservative element, consisting of a mixture of those moved by a spirit of benevolent paternalism and others moved by personal interest, determined to hold back Indian progress, as the Indians saw it. These being a great power, it was not surprising that many of the Indians came to the conclusion that they could only promote the welfare of their country by the time-honoured method of revolution.

We are rapidly alienating the feelings of even the moderate parties. It is not that they object on principle to the Empire, or that they do not admire and respect the King and the British people, but they are more and more driven to feel that the undesirable element in British policy towards India has the upper

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*Sir Bamfylde Fuller, in an interview reported in *The Statesman* (Jan. 15, 1929), said: "The Britisher has lost the respect of the Indians. The Britisher is like a magnet that has lost its magnetism. It is a grave matter when the Commission make their entry protected by barbed wires, and the fact is significant that the Indian attitude towards the Commission is easily intelligible. There is really no reason why India should be controlled by the English mass of Parliamentary electors or by

hand. The undesirable elements which claim to be the real British (and resent the more truly British opinion which supports the principles of liberty) are generally believed to support the sentiments voiced three years ago by Sir William Joynson-Hicks, then Home Secretary, as follows: "We did not conquer India for the benefit of the Indians. I know it is said in missionary meetings that we conquered India to raise the level of the Indians. That is cant. We conquered India as the outlet for the goods of Great Britain. We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we shall hold it . . . I am not such a hypocrite as to say we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general, and for the Lancashire cotton goods in particular."*

English working men utterly ignorant of Indian conditions."

But one reason, valid perhaps from the standpoint of one type of Englishmen, but not from that of others of us, who hold the honour of Britain dearer than her riches, is given by Lord Rothermere in a more recent statement in *The Daily Mail* (June 4th, 1930), when he writes: "At least four shillings in the pound of income of every man and woman in Britain is drawn directly or indirectly from the connection which England has with India. . . . We cannot allow the safety of the most vital of all assets of our Empire to be jeopardised for a single moment longer. For, for us, India is not far from being our all in all."

*Reports of newspapers.

But the Indian conception of revolution among the great party of extremists led by Mr. Gandhi was and is that of passive resistance, or, as it was described in a certain stage of its career, "non-violent non-co-operation." One example of Indian methods in this respect occurred at the Egmore station, Madras, when a large party of delegates returning from the Congress found that there was insufficient accommodation in the train and that two whole carriages were reserved for soldiers entraining at St. Thomas' Mount, two stations further on. The delegates entered the reserved carriages, so the railway authorities simply detached them. The passengers retaliated by lying across the lines, preventing the passage of the train. A deadlock thus continued for more than two hours, at the end of which time the railway authorities yielded to the demands of the passengers, permitting them to occupy the reserved compartments, and easily added the extra carriages necessary for the troops. Then the train steamed off amid rousing cheers.

To this one might add dozens of most varied examples which have occurred within the last two months* in connection with what is called the "Salt Satyâgraha". Breaking of the

*May and June, 1930.

Government salt monopoly was selected as the first item of civil disobedience, and bands of volunteers have proceeded to make salt in many parts of the country, and are now being arrested at the rate of more than a thousand a week, for this, for proclaiming or inciting a boycott of foreign cloth, for peaceful picketing of liquor shops and even for giving food and shelter to those who are intending to do these things.

These are accompanied by many other activities, which are not unlawful, such as the frequent *hartals*, or days of mourning.†

It is, of course, inevitable that some amount of coercion should appear where there are hartals and picketing, but visitors from other countries, seeing the small amount of violence that does arise on the fringe of these

†Shops are closed, houses draped in black, etc. For example, on the day of the arrival of the Simon Commission in Calcutta, (Jan. 12, 1929) all shops and markets were closed and the city presented a deserted appearance, except that there were gatherings and processions of people, many bearing black flags. It speaks volumes for the character of the Indian people that these demonstrations have been attended with so little disorder. An American appreciation appeared recently in the "World-Herald", as follows: "If all nations had the spirit of India, world-peace would come as suddenly and beautifully as the sunrise."

activities, cannot but marvel at the extent to which the Indian public understands the principle of non-violence and is prepared to suffer without any desire for revenge. Let hundreds of people be severely hurt in police baton charges and firing in England, and the families of the injured will see that somebody pays for it. But in India there is no spirit of revenge; the rarity of assassinations proves the spirit of the people, which they themselves call *Satyâgraha,* which means literally "holding to the truth," that is, being true to the best in themselves and to the welfare of their country. I have already recounted my own experience of the temper of a great crowd only two months ago.

At the present time we find a wise and just tendency on the part of a great number of thinking Britishers to support the demands for immediate Dominion Status which are being made by the moderate or liberal parties. Before this it was against these very reasonable people that the British ultra-conservatives directed their attack, in their blindness and fury not knowing friend from foe. Still, these moderate parties formerly put the brake on Mr. Gandhi's movement, while at the same time they preached vehemently and without cessa-

tion Home Rule for India on the lines of Dominion Government within the Empire.

It was not out of kindness of heart that the British gave the Reforms of 1919 (except on the part of a few good people, who had not the greatest power), but it was partly from fear and recognition of the situation. Mr. Montagu (wise man and martyr) came over as Secretary of State, studied the question, conferred with the then Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, and formulated the "Montford" or Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, which constituted the basis of the Government of India Act of 1919.

These Reforms caused indignant comment from almost every party, including the middle, but while the extremists decided for a time to non-co-operate with the new councils and their elections, as they are now doing again, the more moderate parties decided to take all that was given, to work the new Act, but all the same to keep on agitating for Home Rule. It would be beyond the scope of this book to discuss the detailed merits and demerits of the present scheme of government. It may be sufficient for me to say that nearly all Indians, moderate and extreme, find it deeply disappointing and unsatisfactory.

The main features of present government

in British India, under the Government of India Act of 1919, otherwise known as the Reforms, may be stated quite briefly. The new Act was put into operation in 1921, when the Duke of Connaught, speaking for the King-Emperor, said "This is the beginning of *Swaraj* (self-government) in my Empire."

There is a central Government with two chambers--the Council of State and the Indian Legislative Assembly. The former, the Upper House, which has a term of five years, has 60 members (34 elected, 20 officials and 6 non-officials nominated by Government). The latter, the Lower House, which has a period of three years, has 140 members (105 elected, 26 officials, and 14 non-official nominees, of whom one represents labour). This House alone considers the budget and authorizes expenditure.

The total electorates are 32,126 and 1,122,780 respectively, divided vertically into a number of separate religions and vested interests. For the Legislative Assembly there are 51 "Non-Muhammadan", 30 Muhammadan, 9 European, 7 Landowner, 4 trade, 2 Sikh and 2 general constituencies, totalling 105.

In the nine major Provinces there are single Houses, Provincial Legislative Councils,

with franchises varying from 170,924 to 1,821,155. Except in Burma, 70 per cent. is the statutory minimum of elected seats. 20 per cent. may be officials, and the Governor has the right to nominate members representing special interests. There are in all 9 nominated representatives of labour, and 85 nominated and elected representatives of employers' interests, including European, Landowning, Industrial, Commercial and Planting. Some of the special electorates are very small; for example, the Madras Trades' Association, and a similar association in Bombay, European bodies, each returning one member, have 16 and 20 electors respectively. In Bengal 6 trading associations have 13 seats out of 114, and the 13 represent only 1,038 electors out of a total of 1,184,784 for the Province. Similarly, in Bombay 7 out of 86 seats have only 755 electors, out of a total of 778,321.

The supreme powers over India are the Crown and Parliament, representing the British people, and working through the Secretary of State in Council at the India Office in London. The Government of India consists of the Governor-General in Council, appointed by the Crown. The Council consists of seven departmental heads (the Commander-

in-Chief, and the members for Home, Finance, Railways and Commerce, Education, Health and Lands, Industries and Labour, and Law), three of whom are Indians.

The Act did not enfranchise the women. This was left to the option of the various Legislatures. I remember well many of the speeches of Indian members of the Councils on those occasions, and the enthusiastic way in which they spoke of the influence of women in public affairs. By the time of the elections in 1926 women were enfranchised in six out of the nine Provinces, for both the Provincial and the Central Legislatures. Bihar was the last Province to come into line in this respect, having conferred the franchise on women early in 1929. This does not, of course, enfranchise great numbers, because of the property qualifications required. The women voters constitute about 17 per cent. of the total.

In the Provinces the Government is a dual machine, for which reason it is sometimes called a system of diarchy. The Governor (in the major provinces) or Lieutenant-Governor (in the minor) has in one branch his Executive Council, all appointed by the Crown, though some of them are Indians. The other branch

consists of the Governor and his Ministers of Departments who are appointed by, and responsible to, the Legislative Council. These Ministers are Indians. The subjects with which they can deal are denominated "transferred," while the others, retained under the control of the Governor and his Executive Council, are "reserved." Transferred subjects at present are chiefly Education, Public Health, Management of Public Works other than Irrigation and Railways, Development of Industries, Excise, Agriculture and Local Self-Government. Maintenance of Law and Order, Defence of India, Finance and the Land Revenue System are among the chief reserved subjects.*

*In fairness to the Ministers we must remember, before we judge their work, that under the system of "diarchy" they are often considerably restricted. Thus Sir K. Venkata Reddi, Minister of Development for the Madras Presidency, once explained his own position as follows: "I am Minister of Development, minus Forests, and you all know that development depends a good deal on forests. I am Minister of Industries without Factories, which are a Reserved subject, and industries without factories are unimaginable. I am Minister of Agriculture minus Irrigation. You can understand what that means. How agriculture can be carried on extensively without irrigation in the hands of those who are responsible for it is rather hard to realize. I am also Minister of Industries without Electricity, which is also a Reserved subject. The subjects of Labour and Boilers are also Reserved. But these, after all, are some of the defects of the Reform Scheme."

Sir Malcolm C. C. Seton, in *The India Office* describes the powers of the Councils as follows:

> The Provincial Councils have very wide powers of legislation and the annual provincial budgets are submitted to them. In Transferred subjects they possess the power of the purse, but the Governor may restore grants for purposes of the Reserved side of the administration if he considers it essential to the discharge of his responsibility that money refused by the Council should be provided. He can disallow an Act or reserve it for the Governor-General's consideration, and has the exceptional right to enact on his own authority a measure (provided that it deals with a Reserved subject only) the passage of which he certifies to be essential to the discharge of his responsibility.
>
> The Indian Legislature, subject to the preservation of the powers of Parliament, has power to make laws "for all persons, for all courts, and for all places and things, within British India", for "British officials and subjects in Indian States," for "native Indian subjects of His Majesty" beyond British India, and for officers, soldiers and followers of the Indian Army wherever serving. But it requires the sanction of the Governor-General for the intro-

duction of measures affecting the public debt or revenues, religion, military discipline, foreign relations, or for measures treating on matters relegated to provincial governments,

The power of the purse has been very largely entrusted to the Legislative Assembly. . . . The annual budget is laid before both Chambers, and the consent of the Legislative Assembly is sought for the grants required on most matters, though certain heads of expenditure are classed as "non-votable."

Finally the Viceroy and the Crown hold the power of veto, and the former may enact a bill into law, subject to disallowance by the Crown, without the consent of either Chamber.

To understand the system in full, we must observe that the executive in the various departments has its officials for districts and sub-districts, so that we have far away in the village a *munsiff*, or village, magistrate and a *karnam*, or village accountant, who keeps record of the land and the taxes. If there is a teacher, he also may be semi-official, in that he should be a trained man and must do exactly what he is told to do by the visiting Sub-assistant Inspector of Schools. Thus Government ramifies out into the smallest

village, and its officers occupy the centre of the stage in village and country life.

Miss Mayo has no good word for the Indian Legislatures. She says:

> An outsider sitting to-day through sessions of Indian Legislatures, Central or Provincial, somehow comes to feel like one observing a room full of small and rather mischievous children who by accident have got hold of a magnificent watch. They fight and scramble to thrust their fingers into it, to pull off a wheel or two, to play with the mainspring; to pick out the jewels. They have no apparent understanding of the worth of the mechanism, still less of the value of time. And when the teacher tries to explain to them how to wind their toy up, they shriek and grimace in fretful impatience, and stuff their butterscotch in the works.*

This is silly; that is the only word for it. The Indian Legislatures deal with their subjects just as quickly and decisively as most responsible deliberative bodies. One thing which Miss Mayo perhaps did not understand was that for a time some of the non-co-operators decided to take part in the reforms.

*_Mother India_, p. 295. I must remark that Miss Mayo is evidently not acquainted with the character and manners of Indian children.

They abandoned their policy of non-co-operation and stood for election to the different legislatures, and there practised a partial policy of obstruction. It was but human nature, however, that when once inside, they could not bring themselves to obstruct everything. All the same, some of these obstructionist tactics may have been in evidence while Miss Mayo was visiting the legislatures.

Miss Mayo makes out that the people of India are not fit even for this measure of representative government, because they are so new to it, and have inherited nothing but sentiments of despotism from the past. That does not take into consideration the old system of village councils or *panchayats*, or the fact that meetings were common enough in India in connection with the old guilds and almost everything else. It ignores also the old councils of ministers and advisers of the kings and emperors. She says that we have created a new middle class of lawyers and professional men. This has grown up in India as it has grown up everywhere else within recent times.

The following statement is rather amusing: "The history of British administration of

India shows that reactionary disorders follow attempts at speeded progress. The East resents being hustled, even in reforms."* This is most surprising, when all the trouble in the country is due to the fact that the reforms were insufficient, disappointing and unsatisfactory. Our Indian friends will laugh at this example of British hustle. The troubles of 1930 are absolutely due to delay.

What is really suggested here is that the people of India are not ready for Home Rule. I am convinced that such an idea is profoundly contrary to the facts. I think if a British Commission were to sit upon the question of French Home Rule, they would find that the French people are not fit to govern their country,† and I rather suspect that they might come to the same conclusion about the United States—much would be said about the colour question, the lynchings, the hold-ups, easy divorce, graft of various kinds, and last, but not least, the activities of boot-leggers. It is easy to criticize another, to doubt if he is fit to govern himself, and would not be the better for

*_Ibid._, p. 298.

†What head-shaking there would be over M. Briand's sudden resignation from the position of Premier—for the eleventh time!

a little advice, not only presented but, if possible, enforced.*

But I know the peaceable people of India, and I know the talent amounting to genius, the large-heartedness, the humanitarianism of India's great men. We could take the British Cabinet and sit them along a table and opposite them sit man for man an Indian just as good in every respect. And if those Indians belonging to various religious bodies—just as the British belong to sects ranging from atheism to Roman Catholicism, which are

*This argument as to the unfitness of Indians for self-government is, however, usually reinforced by the private considerations of the critics, as, for example, in the following extract from the Calcutta organ of European opinion, the *Statesman* (Jan. 12th, 1929) : "In coming to any decision as to the future form of Government the British people will be deeply influenced by the view of their compatriots who are in India, whether in Government service, or engaged in trade, commerce and industry. These, it will be recognized at Home, are the people who have to carry on their lives under the new conditions whatever they may be, and only so far as they are willing to consent to changes and to work under them will Parliament be inclined to grant the needed alterations in the situation... The future treatment of the Europeans in the country becomes the whole pivot upon which the recommendations of the Simon Commission must turn." Now that the two parts of the Report are in the hands of the public, they may judge how far this prediction and demand has been fulfilled.

extremes as wide as any that the world can show—sit together to deliberate upon the affairs of the Empire, they will be every bit as harmonious and united and concentrated solely upon the problem in hand and the welfare of the people as any body of public men anywhere in the world. It was not far away in past time alone that India was great. India was great in the time of Elizabeth. And India is great in both character and ability to-day.

Miss Mayo unhesitatingly accuses the Indian Member of Parliament of dishonesty. She says it is quite impossible for him to serve the public honestly, first because "the public office-holder who fails to feather the nest of his kin will be branded by all the world not only a fool but a renegade, and will find neither peace at home nor honour abroad." Secondly, "the Hindu office-holder who should forget his caste's interests for interests lying outside that circle would bring down upon his head the opprobrium, perhaps the discipline of his orthodox fellow caste men."*

All this is nothing but abuse of a particularly ignorant kind. These people have been working together in the Legislative Councils, in the Indian National Congress and

*_Mother India_, p. 301.

other bodies in the past and they have not been thus feathering nests or favouring castes. The caste system counts for nothing, for example, in the great *Swaraj* movement. Above all, Indians in Government Service in responsible positions, such as Collectors, Deputy Collectors, Tahsildars, District Magistrates, High Court Judges and others, have not favoured families and castes all these many years.

Therefore, Miss Mayo need not feel so surprised as she does, when facts compel her to declare: "Yet with all its increased expense and diminished efficiency, the new constitution is, *somehow*, turning the wheels."* The Indians would say that it is not surprising that the wheels are now running round better and quicker than before, for although the Reforms are far from satisfactory, the Indian voice is heard and felt more than formerly in the councils of the country.

Turning to the electorate, Miss Mayo says that India has none in any workable sense of the word. This is precisely one of the complaints against the Reforms. The present franchise practically confers a monopoly of the vote on the wealthy and propertied classes. The capitalist classes also have special repre-

*Italics mine.

sentation. And the large constituencies make for high electioneering expenses.

Therefore the Indian bodies, consisting of about 130, which drew up the Commonwealth of India Bill* which had its first reading in the House of Commons in 1925 and will probably serve as a sort of foundation for future Bills, proposed that every sane adult in India should have a vote. This was not to be merely a property vote or an educational vote, enfranchising mainly the merchants, landowners, money-

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*Mr. George Lansbury has said; "The labour movement stands without reservation behind the demand contained in the Bill, for the creation of an Indian Commonwealth which shall become a free equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations." And the Labour Party, at its Annual Conference in 1927, unanimously resolved: "The Conference reaffirms the right of the Indian peoples to full self-government and self-determination, and therefore is of opinion that the policy of the British Government should be one of continuous co-operation with the Indian people, with the object of establishing India, at the earliest possible moment, and by her consent, as an equal partner with the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." Presiding at the British Commonwealth Labour Conference in London (July, 1928), Mr. Ramsay Macdonald said: "I hope that, within a few months rather than years, there will be a new Dominion added to the Commonwealth of our Nations, a Dominion of another race, a Dominion that will find self-respect as an equal within this Commonwealth. I refer to India."

lenders and Brâhmans. It was to enfranchise all, every sane person of full age in the land, male and female, from millionaire to outcaste.

The method of that vote was also wisely considered. The Bill provides that every adult villager shall have a vote extending to the affairs of the village. The members of the village council thus elected, together with some others having suitable educational and other qualifications, will form the electorate for seats on the next higher council, dealing with a large group of villages, called a *taluk* or *firka*, and the same principle will extend upwards to the district council, containing many *taluks*, and so on to the Provincial Council. These provinces will then be federated together in a Central Council and Senate dealing with the affairs of the Commonwealth of India. It thus proposes a system of election in which everybody will vote, but nobody will vote beyond the area of his knowledge and understanding.

The present Government of India Act is due to expire, the Simon Commission Report has been published, and now there will be a conference in which the British Government, Indian Representatives and others will contribute their suggestions to the framing of a

new Bill for presentation to Parliament, though it looks probable that there will be a widespread boycott of the Round Table conference by Indians, unless a statement is made in advance that it is intended to discuss definitely the form which Responsible Government or Dominion Status is to take, and with what temporary safeguards it may be introduced. Let us hope that our British Government will be induced to realise that those responsible for the above Bill and for the later Nehru Report know their own populations and their own country and what they are about, so that they will put some trust in the wisdom of this great desire on the part of the Indians to enfranchise the masses of their peasantry. Then the problem of the outcastes would disappear like a mist before the rising sun of a new era of Indian prosperity and harmony. Let us hope that Britain will not be too timid or hardy.

It has been said that the Brâhmans desire power, and that the low caste and outcaste people hate the Brâhmans. But that these proposals for a general electorate emanate largely from Brâhmans is a proof that they, although not numerous, are willing to risk the opinion of even the numerous "untouchables"

upon their worthiness to be elected to office, and that they believe that even the illiterate villager will be in a position to found what alone can be the salvation of India, prosperous and contented villages, self-governing in nearly all particulars.

At the close of this chapter let me explain the greatest reasons why India should have Dominion Status at once. From the standpoint of Britain, it will put an end to the development of both kinds of extremists and to the increasing thought of entire separation from the Empire. It is therefore at the present time the cautious policy, and "slow progress" is an incautious and highly dangerous policy. One advocates immediate Home Rule, for the benefit, safety and honour of Britain and the Empire, as well as for the direct good of India.

From the Indian side, it will also produce a strong Government which could deal with all questions without such timidity as we have seen in connection with the attempts to raise the age of consent. This was made clear in a Presidential Address to the Indian Social Conference, when Mr. K. Natarajan pointed out that Sir Henry Maine, who was Law Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council seventy-five years

ago, had described how the introduction of British rule tended to stereotype all Indian social life, and thus to prevent its normal growth under the influence of changing circumstances. Its doctrine of neutrality was interpreted in practice to mean opposition to any alteration in the social *status quo*.

Mr. Natarajan went on to say that the late Mr. Montagu was perhaps the first British statesman to realize that the Indian system of administration operated as a barrier to social progress, and therefore he expressly indicated in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report that one great object in expanding the Constitution was to afford greater opportunity for social reform. "Whatever might be the defects of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, they have certainly given a great stimulus to social activity and social legislation, and it is no exaggeration to say that during the last six or seven years we have had more attempts at social legislation than during the previous thirty or forty years. It is the experience not only of India but of other lands that political expansion is followed by social progress."

Mr. C. F. Andrews, who knows India well, also declares :

The normal course of events . . . . has

been for the foreign ruler to fear, to an inordinate degree, the excitement and disturbance that might be caused by any social change wherever religious practice might be even remotely affected. For this reason, the foreign ruler is apt to throw himself almost blindly on to the side of reaction, with the excuse that *laissez faire* is the only wise policy. He cannot possibly intimate, unless he is a genius, the exact moment when the change may be made in social practice with success. He has also a wholesome fear that his own theory of social change may be wrong. He is profoundly ignorant how to act so as to obtain general good-will and approval. Therefore he refrains from action. He cannot take advantage of that "tide in the affairs of men" that at its flood point "leads on to fortune." Instead of this, he misses the tide, and the flood rolls back.*

Therefore it is idle to urge Indians to turn their attention away from politics and bring about social reform first.

Finally, let us realize the danger, which I have already mentioned, of the loss of India to the Empire. Unless Dominion Status comes very soon we shall have repeated revolutionary

***The Tragedy of India*, in *The World Tomorrow*. March 1928.

outbreaks, first without and later on with violence, and orderly progress will become impossible. Instead of that we may easily have a jubilant, happy India, prosperous and friendly, a source of strength to the Empire such as she has never had before.

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Note ;—*References to "Mother India" are omitted, as they occur very frequently.*

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